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July 12, 1869.


THE

LUTHERAN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

HISTORY

OF THE

AUGSBURG CONFESSION,

LUTHERAN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

FROM ITS ORIGIN TILL THE ADOPTION OF THE
FORMULA OF CONCORD.

BY J. H. W. STUCKENBERG,

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PREFACE.

DURING the spring and summer of 1866 I used the valuable library of the university of Tübingen in investigating the history of the Augsburg Confession. I had no idea of writing a book on the subject when I began the study. The importance of the subject itself, and the confessional differences among Lutherans in Europe and America, were sufficient reasons for a thorough investigation of the history of the first and greatest Confession of the Evangelical Church. After pursuing the study for some time, using books and authorities of great value and which are accessible to but few, I found so much that was different from the generally received views and which was really important, that I concluded to continue the investigation and publish the results. My stay in Tübingen till autumn was accordingly devoted almost exclusively to this subject. When I returned to this country, two years ago, I brought with me books to continue the investigation, and since then have received others on the same subject from Germany. Since my return this subject has engrossed the greater part of my time and attention.

My aim in the investigation was to learn the real facts of history; and to give these facts has been the aim in writing this book. I had no party interests to subserve, having taken no part in the various controversies of the church when this work was commenced. Many of the views expressed in this book were formed in the retirement of German university life, away from all controversy, and before I was fully aware of the distractions that now rend the Lutheran Church. In a work of this kind neither party has a right to expect all their views confirmed. Not preconceived notions, but the basis on which the statements are made must be the criterion of truth. I did not expect to find the facts such as they are; in very many instances I was disappointed; but that does not prevent these facts from being facts. And though some facts may be unwelcome to some, that does not make a statement of them any the less important.

The plan of the work is different from any other history of the Confession which I have seen; but it is such as naturally grew out of the subject and the material of the history. The history as far as it is connected immediately with the diet at Augsburg, was regarded as the most important, and therefore that is most fully given. The first nine chapters, which include this part of the history, are made up almost exclusively from cotemporary documents, such as were written during the diet and refer to it and to the Confession. The thorough study of these documents consumed much time; but it was the more necessary because later writers, even the best histories on the Confession, contain many confused and even conflicting accounts, so that for a reliable history one must go back to those original documents. And throughout the whole book the original authorities are made the basis of the statements as far as this was possible. These authorities are all either in German or Latin. I did not think it necessary to give the original of every translation given in the text; sometimes when it was of special importance this has however been done in foot notes or in the Appendix. Nor is the authority for every statement referred to. Had this been done it might have given the book a more learned air, but it would have added little or nothing to its real value, and even would, in many instances, be a hindrance rather than a help. References are, however, given whenever the subject itself, or justice to an author seemed to demand it. Sometimes it was necessary to give a detailed account of the reasons for making certain statements. This was done when a fact was stated concerning which conflicting statements are made by different historians; or when a statement is made the correctness of which is liable to be questioned. But in every instance only so many reasons were given as were thought necessary to justify a statement; though on many controverted points many other reasons might have been given, they were withheld, because for all who want to know the truth more proof was supposed to be superfluous, whilst no amount of proof is sufficient for those who are unwilling to learn the truth.

Of the many works used in the preparation of this history a few are here mentioned, in order that those who wish to consult cotemporary documents and original authorities may know where they are found. And I mention these valuable authorities with the full assurance that their thorough and candid study will rather confirm than invalidate the statements made in this history.

One of the most valuable books used is the "Urkundenbuch zu der Geschichte des Reichstages zu Augsburg im Jahre 1530. Nach den Originalen und nach gleichzeitigen Handschriften herausgegeben von Dr Karl Eduard Förstemann. Halle, 1833." Two volumes. They contain

nothing but original authorities referring to the diet at Augsburg. Some of the documents are in German, the rest in Latin.

"Corpus Reformatorum," vol. II., containing cotemporary documents of Melancthon and others referring to the diet and the Confession. Some documents German others Latin.

Luthers Letters by De Wette, part IV., giving Luther's letters during the diet. Some German others Latin.

"Historia der Augspurgischen Confession durch David Chytræus. 1580." Valuable on account of its many cotemporary documents, such as letters of Protestants at Augsburg and of Luther, also a copy of the Confession supposed by Chytræus to be a copy of the original, and a copy of the papal Confutation. All German.

"Christian August Salig's vollständige Historie der Augspurgischen Confession und derselben Apologie." Four parts, averaging about 1200 pages each, printed 1730-1745. The most complete history on the subject. Full of learned lore, but the arrangement often very imperfect. Many subjects are discussed that do not refer directly to the Confession.

"Historia der Augspurgischen Confession von Ernst Salomon Cyprian, 1730." Valuable chiefly on account of its Appendix of more than 200 pages, containing cotemporary documents.

"Kritische Geschichte der Augspurgischen Confession aus archivalischen Nachrichten nebst einigen diplomatischen Zeichnungen. Von Georg Gottlieb Weber." Two parts. 1783-1784. The most critical history of the Confession extant. Very valuable in a critical investigation of the Confession, especially of its various editions. Many manuscripts and editions of the Confession are collated.

Besides these, the following works have been used: Seckendorff's "Historie des Lutherthums," 1714; Planck's "Geschichte des protestantischen Lehrbegriffs" and "Geschichte der protest. Theologie," 1791-1800; Heppel, "Confessionelle Entwicklung der altprot. Kirche Deutschlands," one vol., 1854; and his "Geschichte des deutschen Protestantismus," 4 volumes, 1852-1859.

These works are of a general character and besides many others have been used more or less in preparing various portions of the history. All of them are very valuable. Special attention need not here be called to the other works used in preparing particular parts of the history. Those who desire to consult them will find them referred to when the subjects on which they are the most valuable are discussed.

J. H. W. STUCKENBERG.

PITTSBURG, OCT. 2, 1868.



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INTRODUCTION.

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THE history of the great Confession of Protestantism is, in a certain sense, the history of the Reformation itself; for in that Confession, as in a focus, are concentrated the rays of light discovered before its preparation, so that with it are connected the reformatory efforts preceding it; and it is also connected with the events of the Reformation succeeding its presentation to the diet at Augsburg, and was in fact the cause or occasion of many of those events. The Augsburg Confession is thus the fruit that grew in 1530 on the tree which was planted in 1517, and then this fruit became the seed from which sprang other plants. It is its intimate relation to the Reformation, and the important part it played in the whole history of the Evangelical Church, as well as its intrinsic importance, that give such interest and significance to the history of the Augsburg Confession. And this history is not only important in studying the doctrinal development of the Reformation, but also in studying its religious life; for in that period of the Church's regeneration doctrine and life were so inseparably connected that that which affected the one also influenced the other. To say that the Reformation was a revival of pure, scriptural doctrines, would be as imperfect as to say that it was a revival of a religious life; it was a revival of living scriptural faith, which includes both doctrine and life. And the study of this period, pregnant with a faith that was earnest and vital, full of the Scriptures and of the Holy Ghost, is of the utmost importance to an age like ours, in which there is such a sad lack of genuine faith, and in which sometimes written systems of faith are made to take the place of the lost faith, sometimes faith is made to mean an orthodoxy which has lost its vitality as much as the wood that is petrified, and sometimes faith is made to mean a mere superficial excitement of religious emotions which has not even substance enough for faith to subsist on, much less to grow on.

The elements that entered into the Reformation, making it possible and making it what it was, were numerous and various. So rich is it in variety, that it has often happened that persons have imagined themselves the true children of the Reformation, when in reality they had only adopted some of its ideas which they developed in a one-sided manner; so rich is it, that numerous sects have boasted of their spiritual wealth, when in fact they had but taken a small part of its treasures, and by no means always the most valuable ones. And this variety makes it so difficult to understand fully the work of reforming the Church in the sixteenth century. Whilst it may be easy to follow a single branch from its source

through its meanderings, it is difficult to trace the great stream of the Reformation from its origin through all its windings, to understand the character, strength and effect of all its tributaries, and to determine the influences that purify or muddy the stream in its onward course. And though it may be easy so to generalize the results of the Reformation as to express them in a few brief sentences, it is difficult to comprehend all the complicated processes in the minds of the reformers and in the Church at large by means of which these results were attained.

Before it can bring forth good fruit the tree itself must be made good ; a man must himself be light before he can give light to others ; so Luther could not restore the truth, nor reform the church, until he himself had discovered the truth and had been reformed. The part he took in the Reformation was but the expression of that which he himself had experienced. One that felt as deeply and intensely as Luther, could not hold giving expression in words and deeds to his inward experience. And to the depth and intensity and energy of his nature, as well as to the fact that the way was in his day prepared for the Reformation more fully than before, we must ascribe the greater success of the work he commenced than that of his predecessors. His severe struggles through doubt to faith made all the truths acquired a matter of experience ; they were not the result of demonstration merely, but also of feeling, and hence they were a possession of the heart as well as of the head. The truth thus became a part of his being, so that in expressing that truth he expressed himself ; and he could no more deny that truth than he could deny himself. This harmony in Luther's being, the harmonious action and reaction of head and heart on each other, had much to do with making the Reformation so healthy, and with preventing the triumph of the extreme tendencies which here and there began to appear. He was not like Erasmus, a mere scholar, nor did he, like the Mystics, lose himself in emotions, but he combined in himself the elements of both. As the sun's rays give both light and heat, so to him all truth was light and heat, illuminating the mind and warming the heart. As a hard student he tried to appropriate the results of learning ; but at the same time he was an ardent admirer of the Mystics, and really had more in common with them than with the mere intellectualist. As the logic of Aristotle had become a mere plaything for scholastics, he had no taste for it ; and though it entered so largely into the lectures delivered at all the various universities of that age, Luther dared to slight it and go directly to the living word of God. That logic had become a mere abstraction, a mere shell without the kernel ; and what he sought was not a lifeless formula, but something that contained and gave life. Whilst others made various branches of learning ends in themselves, Luther used them merely as means for the attainment of more spiritual light and life. Reuchlin and Erasmus deserve great credit for their part in the work of reviving the study of the Hebrew and the Greek languages ; but Luther at once used these languages to ascertain the true sense of the sacred Scriptures, so that he might transfer their living seeds into his living heart. He thus made the revival of letters the means for the revival of the study of the Bible. Much has been said about the preparation for the Reformation by the invention of printing, the new impulse given to the arts, the revival of the study of the classics and of every department of learning ; but these not only prepared the way for the Reformation, but their effect on Luther also prepared him for the great work. He was receptive as well as creative. The age made him that he might make the age. But, as is the

case with every great original mind, his own mental energy determined the nature of the effects that were produced by the various causes operating on him. In this consists Luther's greatness. He was creatively receptive; that is, he not merely received impressions, as the ear conveys mere sound, but in passing through his mind and heart he gave them his own coloring and wrought them into his being as part of Luther. He himself, as regenerated by the divine Spirit, was the leaven, and all influences exerted on him were the meal he leavened. He infused himself into all that was infused into him; like a master mind, he controlled circumstances more than they governed him. And this leavening power in the great reformer accounts for the fact that there was so much of Luther in the Reformation. As the influences exerted on him affected the whole man, so he gave himself entirely to his work. To do him justice he must be viewed in his entirety. He probably had his superiors in every department of scholarship. Erasmus was a greater classical scholar; Melancthon was more philosophical and rhetorical; Calvin was more systematic; but Luther was the most comprehensive, the most energetic, the most living, the most harmonious, and the deepest nature. In his life and in the Reformation we find this combination of various characteristics, this harmony and this entirety. The religious elements that entered into his own being also entered into the Reformation. The change wrought in him produced a new life which developed gradually. The Reformation, too, is a life formed and developed by various elements. It was by no means one-sided, but universal in its character. Indeed, one of the most remarkable features of the Reformation is the fact that it is so free from those extremes into which men are apt to fall in great crises, or in leaving another extreme. There is in its leading men, as well as in the Reformation itself, a remarkable union of the speculative and the practical, of the negative and the positive, of the conservative and the progressive, of doctrine and of life; and in most instances it is difficult to say which of these predominates, so perfectly are they united. Luther at first thought that his efforts to reform abuses were in perfect harmony with the spirit of the Romish church, and that the abuses were practised in spite of that church, not by its authority. And when he found that that church had itself become corrupt, he did not at once reject it, but tried to reform it. And when he discovered that many of her doctrines were erroneous, he did not reject all she taught, but, recognizing in her still many elements of truth, he commenced the sifting process, attempting to separate the error from the truth. His cautiousness in this process is well known; it was not a sudden, but a gradual process. He was so slow and careful because he feared lest he might root up the wheat with the tares. It was a process, too, which cost him much pain and anxiety, for doctrines and practices long and fondly cherished had to be rejected. And though some may be disposed to blame him for being so slow in some respects, we find in this a reason for greater confidence in his work. This conservative element made the work a reformation and not a revolution; that is, it brought to light again principles already established by Christ, and at all times existing to some extent in the Christian church; he did not overthrow the whole order of things, foundation and superstructure, for the purpose of establishing something entirely new. Luther wanted to restore the old, which was nevertheless new to many. To bring the Church back to its primitive purity, such as Christ and his Apostles had made it, that was his aim. And because his work was not a revolution, but a reformation, therefore he retained so much that was believed by

every Catholic. He did not break with the past, but on a historical basis he planted himself and his work. He was very conservative; but he did not, like the Papists, want to conserve all that existed in the Romish Church. He was critical as well as conservative (he was critically conservative). By means of criticism he wanted the chaff swept away; by means of conservatism he wanted the wheat carefully preserved. The Papists wanted to retain all the doctrines that the Romish Church taught; Luther wanted only those retained which had their authority in the Scriptures. Mere human inventions which burden the conscience and obscure the Scriptures, are regarded by him as abuses; these must be rejected. Whilst therefore the Reformation preserved some things it at the same time destroyed others. It was destructive as well as conservative; it was negative as well as positive. And yet the destructive and negative elements of the Reformation are not those of infidelity, simply because they are limited by the conservative and positive elements. Just as its negative elements distinguish the Reformation from the Romish Church, so its positive elements distinguish it from infidelity. But the Reformation not merely conserved the truth still held by the papacy, but it aimed also to restore other truths of Scripture, which had been lost sight of. Rome's errors were rejected to make room for the restoration of the doctrines of Scripture. The Reformation was thus destructive for the sake of being constructive; it destroyed a rotten superstructure to build a more perfect one in its place. Romanism wanted a development of its entire system of doctrine and practice, of its errors as well as its truths; the reformers wanted genuine progress, which consists in rejecting errors, developing old truths and discovering new ones.* And the various elements that entered into the Reformation, are the very elements of all healthy progress. And it is the *forcible* separation of these elements, the adoption of some whilst others are rejected, that destroys the fruit of the Reformation. And the one-sided development of some of the elements to the rejection of the others, has been a fruitful source of modern errors. Some, like the Romanists, adopt only the conservative element, whilst they reject the critical. They want to conserve all that the Reformation has produced, just as if there were no errors left to be rejected. They regard the results of the Reformation just as the Papist regards the results attained by the Romish Church, as matter for preservation, not of criticism. And if this papistical conservatism regards itself as a genuine product of the Reformation, it only proves that it is less candid, or more ignorant of its own character than Romanism. But, on the other hand, some have adopted the negative element to the rejection of the positive. There have, in fact, been Rationalists who claimed to be genuine Protestants, because they looked on Protestantism as a mere negation. But the Protest presented at Spire is a protest against Rome's corruptions in the name of the authority of the Scriptures. Rationalism and all infidelity, consequently, rejects a fundamental part of the Protest in denying the supreme authority of the sacred scripture by subjecting its teachings to the authority of reason, falsely so called.

But it may be asked, to what did the various processes, the destructive, negative, conservative, constructive and progressive tendencies that en-

* Development is not necessarily progress; for there is a development of error and evil as well as of truth and good. Development may be retrogression as well as progress. In the growth of truth and good, and in the destruction of error and evil, consists true progress. The Romish Church aimed at development; the Reformation aimed at progress.

tered into the Reformation, lead? Just as the tendencies at work in the Reformation were totally different from those of Romanism, so the result of these tendencies will give the radical difference between Protestantism and the papacy. The radical difference between the two consists in the different relations in which they place the Christian to Christ. According to Romanism the Christian's relation to Christ is not immediate, but is brought about by the church, the hierarchy; just as if Christ had made the church a repository of His treasures, to which one must accordingly go for their attainment, and not directly to Christ himself. And as the pope was made the head of the church, Christ's vicegerent and representative on earth, everything became dependent on the pope, who was the embodiment of the hierarchy. The history of Romanism proves how fruitful of evil such a theory may be. The hierarchy could make fasting, vows, pilgrimages, alms, indulgences, abolution and other things the condition of salvation, with which all must comply or else be lost. Luther could find no peace in this system, as it gave no reliable assurances of pardon. What he needed was an immediate relation to Christ, without the intervention of a third party. This immediate and intimate relation of the Christian to Christ is the very essence of Evangelical Christianity, and is the great doctrine that distinguishes it from Romanism. This distinction being given, it is not difficult to give the other cardinal differences, which naturally result from this one. Protestantism is based on this immediate relationship; Romanism is based upon the idea that Christ effects the Christian through the church. Romanism, therefore, very consistently claims that the church is inspired and must interpret the Scriptures for the individual; Protestantism claims that Christ gives His Spirit to every Christian which enables him to interpret the Scriptures. The reformers, therefore, claimed that every Christian has the right to interpret for himself God's Word, and that he is not dependent on the church for his interpretation. The Romanists taught that a particular class had special prerogatives, namely the hierarchy; the Evangelical church taught that all Christians are priests. But whilst Christ, His Spirit, and His Word may be the immediate possession of the Christian, what is the condition required of him? The answer is, not the institutions of the church, but that which Christ Himself has instituted. This is not certain ordinances, nor meritorious works, but simply faith. Salvation is offered to all by Christ, but it only becomes a gift when we accept it by faith. But this faith is not made a meritorious work, but it is wrought in us by God's Spirit working through the Word of God. From the immediate relation of the Christian to Christ two other doctrines are accordingly drawn, which played so important a part in the Reformation—the doctrine that the Scriptures are the supreme authority for the individual Christian, and the doctrine that we are justified by grace through faith. The former freed him from the bondage of Rome, the latter gave him the seed which contained the whole of Christianity and which need but be developed to evolve the entire system. These two doctrines were most persistently maintained by the reformers and were as obstinately opposed by Rome since they endangered its authority. Rome was willing to have the Scriptures regarded as the supreme authority, if she was allowed to interpret them for all. But the doctrine, that the Spirit of God is given to every Christian and enables him to interpret the Bible, robbed her of that prerogative. But whilst Protestantism thus rejected Romish tyranny and arrogance, it at the same time guarded against the errors of the fanatics, such as Carlstadt and the Anabaptists. The fana-

ties claimed to have the Spirit of God, and to it ascribed all their vagaries; but the true Protestant doctrine avoided this dangerous fanaticism, by teaching that the Spirit works on the individual through the Word of God. In opposition to the inspiration of the Romish Church, Protestantism, accordingly, maintains the inspiration of every Christian; and in opposition to fanaticism, it maintains the authority of God's Word as the test of all truth. Not what the hierarchy teaches is the truth; not what fanaticism imagines is communicated by God's Spirit is truth; but that is truth which the Word of God reveals to the mind illumined by the Spirit of God. The doctrine of justification by faith was liable to two abuses—that faith would itself be regarded as meritorious, and that faith might be regarded as a mere intellectual assent to the truth, a dead faith. The former error was avoided by ascribing faith itself to God, regarding it as His work, not our own. The latter error was avoided by the very definition of faith. The efforts of the Papists, especially at Augsburg, to make the Protestants acknowledge that we are not saved by faith alone, but by faith, love, hope and good works, failed, because the reformers looked upon faith as including every Christian grace, and they regarded good works as the necessary product of faith. Just as the fruit is the perfection of the plant, with which all that belongs to the plant is necessarily in some way connected, so faith is the perfection of religion in the individual, in which everything Christian is included, and with which everything spiritual is necessarily connected. And just as faith includes every Christian grace, so the doctrine of justification by faith through Christ includes every other Christian doctrine. It recognizes Christ as the Son of God, and His work of atonement; it recognizes the Spirit of God as the source and perfecter of Christ's work in the heart; it recognizes man's depravity and need of redemption, and, in fact, contains in epitome the whole Christian system of doctrine. And he who has this doctrine, in its purity and in its power, has the Gospel.

Whilst now we regard the Reformation as an effort to bring the Christian into immediate relation to Christ, and whilst we regard the doctrine of the supreme authority of the sacred Scriptures, and the cardinal doctrine of the Scriptures that we are justified by grace through faith, as the means used to bring about this relation; we must not suppose that these truths were at once distinctly enunciated at the beginning of the Reformation. Luther did not at once distinctly grasp these ideas and follow them to all their consequences. In his own mind and in the Reformation these ideas developed gradually, like the mustard seed. And this growth was spontaneous, faith being the seed, the Word of God the soil, and the Spirit the light and heat to promote the growth. The Reformation was not the result of human calculation, and it was not promoted by human plans. There was in it an inward and divine necessity which worked out the great results according to the divine will and plan. As is the case in all such great divine movements, much was done by the leading human actors of which they themselves were not fully conscious, and results were reached which they neither aimed at nor even desired. Occasions themselves brought out the truth. The great current bore on the reformers themselves, often tearing them away from positions to which they fondly held and which they unwillingly relinquished. The great works of the Reformation all bear this stamp of spontaneity and divine necessity; they are such as men of the world call accidental, brought about by circumstances, but which the Christian calls providential. In tracing briefly

the first doctrinal development of the Reformation, this spontaneous character and gradual growth of the Reformation will become more evident.

The Reformation did not commence with a distinct confession of faith; such a confession was not yet possible. The Reformation is a great epoch in which are contained many crises. And as is usual in such epochs, there was at first much confusion, indistinctness, doubt and hesitation. The Romish church had no well-defined and systematic statement of its doctrines with which the Evangelical party could compare their views. Protestantism, with all its critical elements, was positive enough to give a clear and full confession of its faith even before the Romish church fixed its doctrines at the council of Trent.* And because so many doctrines were not definitely stated by Rome, the difference between it and the reformers could only be brought out by controversy, in which the doctrines themselves were developed, and in which the lines between the papacy and Protestantism were drawn.

The nailing of the ninety-five Theses on the door of the castle-church at Wittenberg, Oct. 31st, 1517, is generally regarded as the first overt act of the Reformation. But in Luther's own heart the work had been progressing for years. In his lectures at the university at Wittenberg, in which he was appointed professor in 1508, he had directed special attention to the study of the Scriptures. His lectures on the Psalms, Romans, and Galatians, made the importance of faith specially prominent. In 1516 he wrote a letter to George Spenlein, in which he clearly states the doctrine of justification by grace through faith in Christ. Thus the positive elements of the Reformation were already working in him before he commenced to oppose the Romish church. Indeed, this first overt act was not intended to oppose the Romish church, but practices and doctrines which he thought were in direct opposition to the teachings of that church. The theses refer chiefly to the nature of repentance, the value of indulgences, and the power of the pope to pardon sin; but many kindred subjects are also referred to. In these theses the germs of the Reformation are found, but they at the same time still contain Romish errors which Luther afterwards rejected. But a few need be given to show how far Luther's mind had already advanced beyond the views generally held. The first thesis reads: "As our Lord and Master Jesus Christ says: Repent, etc., therefore he wants the whole life of believers on earth to be a constant and unceasing repentance." 2. "He, however, does not want to apply this to internal repentance merely; yea, inner repentance is useless, and no repentance, if it does not externally work the entire killing of the flesh." 32. "Those who think that by means of indulgences they shall be assured of salvation, shall go to the devil." 36. "Every Christian who has true repentance and sorrow on account of sin, has full remission of punishment and guilt, even without letters of indulgence." 62. "The real treasure of the church is the holy Gospel of the grace and glory of God." 94. "Christians should be exhorted to strive to follow their leader, Christ, through tribulation, death and hell."

Tetzel, the vender of indulgences, published counter theses which were prepared by Conrad Wimpina, professor of theology at Frankfurt; and afterwards he published a second series against a sermon on indulgences preached by Luther. These theses opened Luther's eyes on many subjects,

* It was the Evangelical Church that made Romanism fully conscious of itself.

since they revealed to him the real sentiments of his opponents. The third thesis of the second series against Luther reads:* "Christians should be taught, that the pope, on account of the supremacy of his power, is above the entire universal church and the councils, and that in all submissiveness his precepts are to be obeyed." 4. "Christians should be taught, that the pope alone has power to decide in matters of faith, also, that he alone, and no one else, has the authority to interpret the sense of the sacred Scriptures, and to justify or condemn all the words and works of others." 5. "Christians should be taught, that the pope's decision in matters which pertain to faith, and which are necessary to salvation, can by no means err." 7. "Christians should be taught, that they ought to rely more on the pope's opinion in matters of faith given by him in (spiritual) courts, than on the opinions of all wise men which they take from the Scriptures."

Other replies to Luther's theses served to bring out the views of Papists and to incite Luther to new attacks. Sylvester Prierio, a Dominican friar at Rome, attacked him severely, and ascribed unlimited power to the pope.† In his reply to Prierio, in 1518, Luther said: "If this is the doctrine taught publicly and with impunity at Rome, with the knowledge and under the direction of the pope and the cardinals, then I publicly confess with this writing, (which I do not hope,) that the veritable antichrist sits in the temple of God and reigns at Rome in the real Babylon, Rev. xviii. 16, and that the court of Rome is the synagogue and school of Satan, Rev. iii. 6."

So great was the excitement created by the theses of Luther and the subsequent discussion, that Rome found it advisable to make serious efforts to induce the monk of Wittenberg, whose arguments could not be refuted, to recant or at least to be silent. Cajetan and Miltitz held conferences with him for that purpose, but they failed to accomplish their purpose. Luther, however, promised the latter to write the pope an humble letter, which he did in March, 1519. In this letter he states, that his opponents had been the means of spreading his writings so much that their doctrines were now too deeply rooted in the hearts of many to be destroyed, even if he recanted. He also says: "I declare before God and all creatures that I never desired nor aimed—nor do I now—to attack in any manner the Romish Church or the authority of your Holiness, nor with any kind of cunning to destroy anything. Yes, I freely testify that the authority of this church is above everything, and that nothing in heaven or on earth is to be preferred to it, except only Jesus Christ who is Lord over all." To Spalatin he wrote about the same time: "I never intended to renounce the authority of the Apostolical see." He also adds: "If the Romish decrees only leave me the pure Gospel they may take everything else." Christ and the Bible were his all; if only these were left him, every other object might be taken. But the fact that he so persistently adhered to these, necessarily drove him farther and farther away from Rome. In 1519 he published the first edition of his commentary on Galatians, in which he developed the doctrine of justification by faith, at the same time showing that the faith which is acceptable unto God, is not dead, but works by love. The same year he published a sermon on the Lord's Supper, in

* Planck, *Entst. d. Prot. Lehrb.*, I., 94.

† It is said that he actually claimed that the pope could not be deposed by a general council, nor by the whole world, even if his conduct was such as to lead men en masse to the devil.

which he states that it would be advisable for a general council to order that all Christians, the laity as well as the priests, should receive the cup. This subjected him to new attacks. In his dispute with Eck at Leipzig, also in 1519, the principal subjects discussed were, the primacy of the pope, the authority of the councils, repentance, purgatory and indulgences. Luther was charged by his opponent with teaching the very heresies for which Huss had been condemned; in fact the charge of heresy was one of the most powerful arguments of his enemies. The dispute at Leipzig not only spread his doctrines but also developed the truth in himself. One after another the traditions of Rome lost their power over him, and gradually its monstrous errors were discovered and rejected. In 1520 he published a book addressed to the "Christian nobility of the German nation." In this he shows that there is no difference between the priest and the laity, except that the former has certain duties to perform which belong to his office. And each Christian, he claims, has a right to interpret for himself the Scriptures, and this is a privilege by no means belonging exclusively to the pope, whose judgment is not infallible. In this book he also advocates the right of priests to marry, regarding the prohibition as a commandment of devils. He opposes the creation of so many saints by the pope, and the establishment of so many holidays. The work is very bold, full of Luther's most striking characteristics. It spread rapidly and its effect was very great. In the same year he published a sermon on the "Freedom of the Christian," in which he also maintains the universal priesthood of Christians. He shows, too, the true relation of faith to works. He teaches that good works never make a good man, but that a good man produces the good works; so bad works never make a bad man, but the wicked man produces bad works. But he carefully guards against the error of making faith itself occupy the same place given by the Papists to good works, by teaching that salvation cannot be earned, it is a free gift of God's mercy, and faith is merely the condition for appropriating this grace. Whilst thus Luther's own mind was developing in the truth, and whilst numerous works were being published to spread the truth, a bull, at the instigation of Dr. Eck, was issued from Rome, condemning the hero of Wittenberg. But so little did it intimidate him that soon afterwards he published his book on the "Babylonian Captivity of the Church," in which he mercilessly attacks the Romish Church by fearlessly exposing its gross corruptions. Rome itself was the Babylon on which he poured his vials of wrath. Till this time he had acknowledged that popery had human authority which must be respected, though not divine; in this work he also denies the former. He acknowledges only three sacraments: the Lord's Supper, Baptism, and Repentance. He pronounces the withholding of the cup from the laity tyrannical and wicked. The doctrine of transubstantiation is rejected by him, and he teaches that in the Supper there are real bread and real wine. But he warns against hasty and revolutionary measures. Babylon holds its subjects in tyranny, which must be endured as an unavoidable evil, just as the tyranny of the Turks if they became masters of Germany. He also opposes the Romish doctrine that the mass is a sacrifice, which he had already opposed before this in a sermon on the mass. The effects of baptism, he teaches, are not dependent on the external sign, but on the faith of the person baptized in the promises given in the ordinance. And the blessings of baptism are perpetual, belonging to the subject of baptism whenever by faith he appropriates them. If one sins after baptism, he need but believe in the promises and all is well. "Seest thou," he says, "how rich a baptized Christian

is, since he cannot, not even if he wished, not even by means of ever so many great sins, lose salvation, if only he does not refuse to believe. No sin can condemn him except unbelief. As soon as faith in the divine promises, given in baptism, returns, or as long as this faith continues, all sins are destroyed and removed in an instant by means of this faith, or rather through the faithfulness of God, who cannot deny himself as long as faith clings to his promises." In the baptism of children he teaches that the faith of the sponsors stands for that of the child. He cannot see why the laying on of hands in confirmation should be regarded as a sacrament. Marriage, he says, is erroneously called a sacrament because Ep. v. 32 is misunderstood, where marriage is called a great mystery, which word "mystery" the Vulgate translates sacrament. The consecration of priests, and extreme unction, are also rejected as sacraments, because as such they have no authority in the Scriptures.

15 20 Another book published by Luther in 1520 deserves special mention. It is entitled "Popery at Rome" (Pabstthum zu Rom) and was written in reply to a number of attacks made by a Franciscan in Leipzig, Augustine von Alveld, who had been particularly zealous in defending the authority of the pope. This book is chiefly valuable on account of the important distinction it makes between the invisible and visible, the internal and external Church. This distinction was the more important then because it had so completely been lost sight of. The union of Christendom is spiritual, consisting of all those who have the right faith, hope and love. It is not dependent on that which is merely external, nor is it confined to any place, as Rome. To belong to the Romish Church does not make a man a Christian, nor does it make him a heretic to be outside of that Church. Wherever there are true believers, there is the true spiritual Church. The only head of this Church, on earth and in heaven, is Christ, who himself rules this Church, without having a vicegerent or substitute on earth. There is no real difference of rank in this Church dependent on anything external. The position occupied in it depends on a man's piety, he being highest who is most pious. Luther makes a fine distinction between Christ as Lord and Head. He is Lord of all—men, angels, and devils—but he is Head only of those that believe and are pious; for the Head and members must be so intimately connected that the latter are dependent on the former. But besides this invisible and spiritual Church, there is also an external Church. In this there is an order called "spiritual," consisting of bishops, priests and friars*; they are not called so on account of faith, of which they are perhaps destitute, but because they have been consecrated with external ointment, wear crowns and peculiar garments, offer certain prayers, and perform certain works, as mass and other services at the altar. But to apply to this order the term "spiritual" or to call it the "Church," is an abuse, which has led to serious errors, since persons have been led to believe that such external glitter constituted Christianity or the Church. But he does not want to separate the external and internal Church; they are related to each other somewhat as body and soul. Whilst the spiritual Church embraces all who are really Christians, the external embraces all who want to be regarded as Christians, whether they are or are not.

This treatise is remarkable for its deep spirituality. Luther in it again makes the Spirit and its fruits in the heart the essence of Christianity,

* They were called "Geistliche," "geistlicher Stand;" when in reality they were in many cases anything else rather than spiritual.

from which all that is external receives its value. In direct opposition to the hierarchy of Rome, the love of show and the universal externalizing tendencies of the age, he again placed himself radically on the spiritual teachings of Jesus. It is this spiritual insight of Luther, so evident in his various works of this period, that is in such striking contrast with the prevailing materialistic views of that age.

The year 1520 was rich in works that were rich in spiritual truths. Within three years after the Reformation commenced we find its principal doctrines stated so clearly and forcibly, that all opposition could only serve to develop and spread them. So far were the enemies of the Reformation from checking its progress that they rather poured oil on the fire kindled by Luther. The wrath of man was made to praise God. So firm was Luther in maintaining his doctrines, that his noble heroism at the diet at Worms, in 1521, has gained him the admiration of foe and friend, wherever the story is read. And so powerful already was the truth, that Luther could withdraw to the Wartburg without endangering the work commenced. Here he commenced the greatest of all his works, the translation of the Bible. That Book of books had been his all, the source of his knowledge, the criterion of the value of the teachings of all men, his own included; and as its doctrines had been the source of the Reformation, so their maintenance was the hope of the church. To give the Book to this German nation in their mother tongue, was his ambition. At the Wartburg he made the first draft of a translation of the New Testament and the five books of Moses; not however till 1534 was the whole work completed. But while Luther had withdrawn from the scene of activity, and could not so immediately exert his personal influence on the work of the Reformation, the friends he had gained were using their influence to promote the work.

In 1521 the first strictly dogmatic work of the Reformation was published, the *Loci communes* of Melancthon.* The book grew out of the author's lectures on the epistle to the Romans. Instead of discussing the doctrines in the order given in the epistle, he divides his book into topics, and under each head he attempts to give the doctrine of the epistle on that subject. As his aim was rather practical than speculative, he omits the doctrines which are of a metaphysical character, such as the doctrine of the Trinity, of Creation, of the Person and Natures of Christ. He could the more safely omit these doctrines, because there was no dispute on them between the reformers and the Papists. In this work Melancthon denies the freedom of the will in the most positive manner. All that occurs must necessarily come to pass. All occurs according to the will of God. A predestination is taught which is as absolute and unconditional as that which had been taught by Augustine and which was afterwards taught by Calvin. The doctrine of original sin and total depravity is developed with as much consistency as that of predestination. Whilst man is thus robbed of all freedom and of all power to do good, the whole work of regeneration is ascribed to God. All that is good in us is produced by the grace of God, through His Spirit. The sacraments are regarded as signs or evidences of God's grace, not as means of justification. There are but two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The sale of this book was rapid and its influence very great. From 1521 till 1525 eighteen editions were published. Luther's admiration of

* The title of the first edition reads: "*Loci communes rerum theologicarum, seu hypotyposes theologicas.*"

the work was unbounded.* The later editions of the work were much enlarged and considerably altered. For changing the views on the freedom of the will he was afterwards severely blamed, especially by the Flacian party.

Whilst the leaders of the Reformation were thus actively engaged in developing and spreading the doctrines of Scripture, the condition of many churches, which had thrown off the papal yoke, was very sad. The ignorance of the preachers was so great that in some instances the first rudiments of the Bible were not known.† Sometimes the greatest immorality and disorder prevailed. It was therefore of the utmost importance to improve the condition of the churches which professed to embrace the Evangelical doctrines. In 1526 Luther published a book on the order of worship to be observed in the churches. The next year Melancthon visited the churches in Thüringen, for the purpose of discovering the real condition of affairs, and to improve the same. In order that the more perfect organization of the church in Saxony might be accomplished, he wrote a book (*Visitationes-Artikel*) containing 18 articles.‡ These articles, which were both doctrinal and practical, showing what ought to be taught in the churches and how they should be governed, were reviewed by Luther, approved by him, and provided with a Preface, in which he says they were not to be regarded as strict laws, "just as if we wanted to make new papal decrees." The book was of vast importance. While preceding works were mostly prepared with a view of stating and defending the doctrines of Scripture in opposition to Romanism, this book was prepared for the purpose of applying the results attained by the Reformation to the organization and development of the Evangelical churches themselves.

Many other works, which preceded the Augsburg Confession and prepared the way for it, must necessarily be passed over in this introduction. Among the most important of these are Luther's Catechisms, published in 1529. Their contents need not be specified, as the books themselves are published in the Book of Concord. Nor is it necessary to describe the articles immediately preceding and most intimately related to the Augsburg Confession, such as the *Marburg*, *Schwabach* and *Torgau* articles, which are more fully considered in the history of the Confession itself.

From this brief sketch of doctrinal development since 1517 it is evident that there was constant progress in the growth and spread of the truth, and in the establishment and organization of the Evangelical church. Nor did this progress stop in 1530. The Augsburg Confession indicates the point reached in the progressive development of scriptural doctrines and of the principles of the Reformation. It was not the goal which must not be passed, but it was the goal attained during the march of the Reformation for thirteen years, and it became the starting point in the new career of progress. It is but a link in the great chain of that progressive Reformation whose very principles demand that it shall not, like the body, cease growing and commence decaying, but, like spiritual

* In his work against Erasmus, "*De servo arbitrio*," he speaks of it as "*invictum libellum, suo iudicio non solum immortalitate, sed canone quoque ecclesiastico dignum.*" Heppe, *Conf. Entw.*, 28. Luther in this book defends views similar to those adopted by Melancthon on the freedom of the will.

† In 1527 a preacher in Saxony, who had been a monk, was asked whether he taught the ten commandments? He answered, 'I have not yet got the book.'

‡ Thirteen were doctrinal, the 14th referred to the war with the Turks, the 15th treated of divine worship, the 16th and 17th of Church discipline and government, the 18th of schools.

progress, shall be constant and unending. The Reformation only commenced the work that is still to be continued. That Reformation was a faith and a life—a faith that was more than can be confined in any dead formulas of doctrines, and a life which contained more than any system of anatomy reveals. And as all Christian faith and life are more than can be expressed in any human definitions and articles, therefore we must regard all the works of the Reformation as an effort to reveal and realize, in words and deeds, its inner life and faith, though none of them can be regarded as a perfect revelation and realization. The faith and life of the Reformation stretched out beyond human traditions, beyond the decrees of popes and councils, beyond the institutions of the external church and of human wisdom, in their earnest effort to reach the Scriptures and Christ. In so far as this was accomplished, the Reformation was perfect; in so far as it failed, it was imperfect; and in so far as the works of the Reformation enable us to accomplish the same aim, they are to be prized beyond expression; but in so far as they prevent the accomplishment of that aim, they are to be treated as the reformers treated all human works, those venerable ones of the fathers included. Whilst this is the test that must be applied to all the works of the Reformation, the Augsburg Confession included, the following history does not aim to apply this test, but merely to give the history of the Confession itself, without discussing more than is absolutely necessary its doctrines. And the history of the Confession cannot affect its doctrines. Their standing and falling, their truth and error, depends on their intrinsic merit, not on the manner in which the Confession was prepared, or was afterwards received. Its gold is gold, even if the whole world pronounces it dross; and its dross is dross, even if the whole world pronounces it gold.





HISTORY

OF THE

AUGSBURG CONFESSION.

CHAPTER I.

PREPARATION FOR THE DIET AT AUGSBURG.

Charles, the oldest son of Philip the Beautiful, Archduke of Austria, and of Johanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, was born in Ghent, the 24th of February, 1500. He had already inherited various crowns from his ancestors when in 1519 his grandfather Maximilian, emperor of Germany, died. He at once became an aspirant for the vacated throne. Francis I. King of France, was his rival, and in vain spent great sums of money to secure the imperial crown. Through the powerful influence of Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony, who had himself refused the proffered crown, Charles was elected emperor, the fifth of that name who reigned over Germany. Although he owed his election to the firm friend and defender of Luther, the ruler of the land in which the Reformation had its birth, Charles V. had no intentions of manifesting his gratitude by favoring the great reformer or his work. One of his first acts after entering Germany was to put Luther under the ban and condemn his teachings, at the diet held at Worms, in 1521. But fortunately for the Reformation, the numerous wars waged by the emperor necessitated his absence from Germany for nearly

nine years, during which time Luther, in spite of papal bulls and imperial edicts, was unmolested, and Evangelical doctrines spread wider and struck their roots deeper throughout the empire.

In 1529 the emperor brought his wars in Italy against the pope and the King of France to a successful close. With the former a peace was concluded at Barcelona, with the latter at Cambray. Opportunity was thus given the emperor to turn his face towards Germany, where his presence was much needed. The Turks had again entered Hungary, and meeting with but little opposition, they marched into Austria and besieged Vienna. The religious dissensions between Papists and Protestants had also assumed formidable proportions. The emperor's brother Ferdinand, King of Bohemia and Hungary, who took the emperor's place in Germany during his absence, had failed as signally in checking the rapid spread of Luther's doctrines, as in placing any serious obstacle in the way of the advancing Turks. The emperor, therefore, turned his attention to Germany, in the hope of accomplishing by his presence what Ferdinand had in vain tried to do in his name. His reasons for desiring a settlement of the religious difficulties were, of course, more political than religious. His character, his training, and his position all naturally led him to look at the question from a political standpoint. The Reformation, he thought, threatened the peace and unity of the empire. He did not clearly distinguish between the legitimate work of the Reformation, and the excesses so lately committed during the war of the peasants and by the Anabaptists. In case of war with a foreign power, the Catholics and Protestants might be arrayed against each other, thus causing division in the empire itself. Whatever party the emperor favored, he must expect the opposition of the other, which might indeed be weak in itself, but if it allied itself with the emperor's foes in other lands, it might become very dangerous. And even at this very time, in order that the entire force of the empire might be directed against the Turks, it was thought indispensable that first of all the religious controversies should be settled.

Although the war there was ended, the emperor still

lingered in Italy. He entered Bologna in November 1529, and in that city spent the winter, living in the same palace with pope Clement VII.,* an unpropitious omen for the Protestants. Though they had lately waged war against each other, the pope and the emperor now found it to their mutual interest to be friends, since it was very probable that they could use each other to accomplish their ambitious designs. And what could not the union of the greatest spiritual with the greatest temporal power accomplish? It was but natural that the pope should use his utmost exertions to make his ally a dutiful son of the church and a bitter enemy of the Reformation. In order that the authority of the pope might again be established throughout the empire, it was necessary to destroy the work of Luther, a task which none could better accomplish than the emperor himself; and for this the pope wanted to use him. His anathemas were openly treated with the contempt they deserved, and his spiritual power, which so lately yet had been supreme, was utterly ignored by the Protestants. As long as the emperor and pope were at war with each other, the former could hardly blame the reformers for attacking the latter who was his enemy. But now that peace was restored, devout Catholics cherished the hope that the secular power would become the right arm of the Romish Church to destroy its enemies.

Charles was well aware that many abuses had crept into the church, and felt the need of a reformation. He therefore favored the convening of a general council to decide the questions in dispute between the contending parties, and also to devise means for the reformation of abuses. But this the pope obstinately opposed. He claimed to have sufficient authority to settle the disputes without calling a council; he wanted to avoid the public discussion of subjects of which he considered himself the sole judge. Indeed, this opposition to a council had become hereditary at Rome, since the popes feared that their power might be curtailed, or that their characters and acts might be too severely criticised. And what need was there of a council, since the popes claimed as great authority for their decisions

* This pope was the bastard son of Julian de Medicis.

as a council could claim ? The calling of a council would be an acknowledgment that the pope had not the requisite authority to decide the disputed questions, or else that he was too impotent to exercise it.

Different historians * speak of a meeting of the pope and emperor in the palace at Bologna, at which the latter urged through his chancellor, Mercurinus Gattinara, the necessity of assembling a council. The pope in person replied to this address, denying the necessity of a council which none but him had a right to convene. He, on the other hand, urged the emperor to use his power in suppressing at once all doctrines contrary to the teachings of the church ; for, he said, it would be an easy matter for him, who had subjected Italy and defeated the king of France, to subdue a small part of the German nation. The pope did not, however, convince the emperor. The latter ordered his chancellor to reply, but Gattinara was abruptly stopped by the pope who did not want to be contradicted by him. Thereupon Charles himself replied, "you, pope Clement, yourself know that all sensible and pious people in Europe ask and sigh for a council which shall be assembled and governed in a Christian manner." He mentioned some of the abuses which ought to be corrected, and claimed that a council was also needed to form a systematic summary † of all the Christian doctrines which ought to be preached and taught in all nations and churches ‡ The pope made no definite

* Chytræus, Cœlestinus, Sarpi and others. This account is indeed discredited by some modern writers ; but it is hardly probable that the meeting and the addresses, which are said to have been made, are mere fiction.

† Summa et corpus.

‡ For a long time the need of a general council had been felt, and the popes had frequently been implored to assemble one, to correct the many abuses that had crept into the church. The diet held at Nuremberg, published on the 18th of April, 1524, the following decree: "We decide that the emperor and pope shall assign a time for holding a council, with the least possible delay ; for the necessity of an œcumenical assembly is perceived daily more and more, in order to arrest the disorders which overwhelm Christendom, and to save social order from the abyss into which infamous Catholics, debauched priests, and dangerous innovators, threaten to plunge it." But the popes would give no heed to this

reply, but dismissed the matter, promising to consider it with his cardinals.

Both were agreed that peace and unity must be restored to the distracted church; but they differed as to the best means for accomplishing this, the one being in favor of using force and compelling unconditional submission to the church, the other desiring to give the Protestants a hearing and then decide the questions in dispute. As Clement and Charles could not agree about the convening of a council, the emperor concluded to hold a diet at Augsburg for the purpose of providing means to oppose the Turks, and for the discussion and settlement of the religious questions. Accordingly, on the 21st of January, 1530, he issued a proclamation fixing the 8th of April as the day for the commencement of the diet, which time was afterwards changed to the first of May, though the diet did not open till nearly two months after that time. The tone of the proclamation* is unusually mild, much more so than could, under the circumstances, have been expected. There are no threats made; there are no charges against the Protestant princes for failing to comply with former edicts; there was nothing that could awaken the slightest apprehension in the minds of the Lutherans, or even unpleasant recollections. The subjects to engage the attention of the

and similar decrees. The thing they most of all dreaded was an inquiry into, and a reformation of, abuses. When at the diet at Nuremberg the prince of Saxony declared, that the interests of religion called for a prompt suppression of the disorders of the Roman clergy, the papal legate, Campeggio, silenced him, "and declared that the mere enunciation of such a proposition constituted the crime of heresy." The cardinals dreaded reforms as much as the pope and, therefore, confirmed him in his opposition to a council. Clement wanted the matter of reforms entirely in his own hands. "In regard to the convocation of a council, his holiness declared, that by virtue of his omnipotence, he regarded this measure pernicious and baneful, and should consequently formally oppose it." He wanted no reformation, but the suppression of the reformation by force. History of the Popes, by Louis Marie De Cormenin, Vol. II, 193.

* The proclamation is found in Foerstemann's "Urkundenbuch zu der Geschichte des Reichstages Zu Augsburg im Jahre 1530, Vol. I. p. 1. See also Cyprian "Historia d Augsb. Conf." p. 55. Seckendorf "Historie des Lutherthums." p. 10 11.

diet are stated to be, the war with the Turks, and the settlement of the religious disputes. On the latter subject the emperor says that it is his desire "to remove the discord in matters of faith, to commit past errors into the hands of the Saviour, diligently to hear, understand, and consider among themselves, with love and good will, each one's sentiments, opinions and views, for the purpose of comparing them and bringing them to the same Christian truth, to remove all that was not properly interpreted by either party, to unite all in one and the same Christian religion, and that as they all stood and fought under the same Christ they might also live in unity in the same communion and church, and thus finally establish and maintain unity and peace."

According to this programme it seemed as if all harshness and threatenings, so common heretofore, were now to cease; as if at the diet the investigation of the questions in dispute was to be conducted with the utmost impartiality, and the decision to be given solely in accordance with the truth. At the diet was to be done all that could possibly have been asked of the best and most impartial general council. Indeed, the aim seemed to be to make the diet take the place of such a council. The proclamation therefore promised all that the Protestants could wish.

The policy indicated in this proclamation was very different from that heretofore pursued by Rome. The Reformation had been treated as totally wrong, as something that must be suppressed by force, without the privilege of a hearing or defence. The papal bull of 1520 condemned Luther as a heretic, and ordered his books to be burnt, and his person to be seized and sent to Rome. The threats it contained only served to strengthen the reformer's determination and increase his power of resistance. He treated the bull with the contempt it deserved, by publicly burning it with other papal documents at Wittenberg. Nor did it accomplish the pope's desires outside of Wittenberg. Fierce Papists were indeed elated with joy and gloried in their suppressed triumph over the reformer. In some places his books were burnt; some of his friends were intimidated; some were persecuted, and his own life was threatened. But the Reformation itself was not destroyed, nor its progress effectually checked.

At the diet at Worms in 1521 Luther was tried and condemned. The edict published the 26th of May, was virtually an imperial sanction of the papal bull. In this edict of Worms all were threatened with the penalties attached to the crime of high treason, who, after the expiration of his safe conduct, should harbor Luther or give him any kind of succor. All persons were commanded to seize him and bring him at once before the emperor, or hold him until he should decide what was to be done with him. His books were to be destroyed; his adherents were to be apprehended and their property was to be confiscated. And whoever dared to act contrary to this decree was to be placed under the ban of the empire.*

At the diet at Spire, in 1529, a resolution was adopted which was less severe than the edict of Worms, but which was nevertheless very unfavorable to the cause of the Reformation.† Those who had till then executed the edict of Worms, should continue to do so till the assembling of a general council. In all other places where the doctrines of the Reformation could not be attacked without great danger, no new reforms should be undertaken. This edict, which was intended to check and cripple the Reformation, was the occasion of the noble Protest which gave the Protestant Church its name.

But all these efforts to crush the Reformation by threats and by force had signally failed. Other means for restoring harmony to the Church were now to be resorted to. These were indicated in the proclamation. It promised a fair investigation and impartial decision of the whole matter. It was couched in language which was intended to allay the fears and win the confidence of the Protestants. But whilst its mild tone and fair promises greatly surprised, they did not deceive them. The emperor's own acts, still fresh in the memory of all, were too glaringly in conflict with these smooth words to leave them much hope that they were anything but promises which were calculated to allure that they might deceive. They were well aware that in the treaty between Charles and Clement, in 1529, it had been

* Seckendorf 372.

† Seckendorf 940.

agreed that the emperor and his brother Ferdinand should use their influence to bring them back into the Church of Rome, peaceably, if possible, otherwise by force; and that on the other hand the pope was to use his influence to accomplish the same end by inducing other Catholic princes to aid in this pious work.* Nor could the proclamation obliterate the memory of the fact, that very recently the ambassadors, sent by the Protestants to the emperor to present him with the Protest presented at Spire, had been very unkindly received and even placed under arrest. Such acts filled them with apprehensions, and made his promises to enter Germany seem like threats. The apparent intimacy of the pope and emperor at Bologna, served only to confirm their fears that the intentions of Charles were anything but friendly; and events that occurred there after the issue of the proclamation were as much in conflict with its contents as those that had immediately preceded it. For the sake of being crowned by the pope, Charles was willing to enter into the most solemn compact to promote the wishes of Clement. On the 22d of February, the emperor received from the hands of the pope the iron crown of Lombardy, and two days later, on the birthday of Charles, the pope crowned him Roman emperor. The oath taken by him on the latter occasion made it obligatory on him to use all his power to defend the authority of the pope and the Church of Rome, which could not be interpreted to mean less than the entire extinction of the Protestant faith.

These things made the Evangelical party justly apprehensive that the real intentions of the emperor were not expressed in his proclamation. Some thought the mild words only expressed the views of Gattinara, the imperial chancellor, who had probably dictated them. The Evangelical princes feared that a trap might be set to catch them, and therefore they debated the question whether it would be advisable for them to attend the diet in person? Would they not, if once at Augsburg, be entirely at the mercy of the emperor? Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, at first hesitated whether to attend, and warned the Elector of

* Cyprian, p. 59.

Saxony of the risk they might run at Augsburg. The elector, who sought the advice of his counselors in the matter, was urged by Bruck and also the prince electoral to go, which advice he followed. On the 23d of March, he wrote to the emperor accepting the invitation to the diet.

George, margrave of Brandenburg, was absent from home when he was informed that a diet was to be held at Augsburg. His letter to his counselors directing them to make preparations for the diet, evinces the same firmness, conscientiousness and reliance on God which the margrave so often manifested during the diet itself. His letter* indicates his great anxiety to do the utmost for the defence of the evangelical doctrines. In this matter, he says, which pertains to God's glory and the welfare of our souls, I want you to spare no cost. He closes with these words: "There (at Augsburg) we expect by the grace and assistance of God to abide by God's pure Word, which alone has power to save, and for its sake, if it is God's will, we are willing to sacrifice life and all temporal things, that we may gain that which is eternal."

Whilst the Papists might rely on numbers and on the emperor for the success of their cause, the Protestants were humbled when they looked at the gloomy prospects before them. Their only hope was in God. Of the righteousness of their cause they had no doubt. This very weakness became their strength, since it led them to rely less on self and more on Him whose glory they wished to promote. The religious aspect of the diet concerned them most, and therefore religion took so conspicuous a part in their preparations for it. Only a few days before the elector started for Augsburg, he addressed a letter to the members of the various city councils in his dominions, in which he requests them to urge the preachers earnestly to admonish the people from the Scriptures, and to pray for the common peace of Christendom as well as for the diet, so that its deliberations might, through God's grace, rebound to the welfare of Christianity and the glory of God. The united prayers of their people were thus to back the princes in their work at Augsburg.

* Dated March 24th. Forstemann I. 119.

The Wittenberg theologians were summoned by the elector to Torgau, to be ready to start with him for Augsburg on the 3rd day of April. Just before commencing the journey Luther preached a sermon at Torgau, on the text: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven"—a very suitable introduction to the noble confession of the Protestant princes before the diet. The elector was accompanied on his journey by the theologians, Luther, Melancthon, Spalatin, Jonas, and Agricola; by John Frederick, prince electoral; Ernest, duke of Luneburg; prince Wolfgang of Anhalt; Albert, count of Mansfeld, and seventy of the nobility, who, with their attendants, made the entire retinue of the elector consist of one hundred and sixty horsemen.*

During the journey Luther and the other theologians frequently preached in different churches. Coburg, which was the nearest city in the elector's dominions to Augsburg, being distant from that city a journey of three days, was reached on the 16th of April. In this city Luther was left, his residence being in the castle called Ehrenburg, where he remained during the diet, spending in this castle nearly six months. On the 23rd the elector continued the journey with the rest of his train, and reached Augsburg the 2nd of May, before any other member of the diet had arrived.

Why was Luther left at Coburg? It seems as if he, the first and greatest of all the reformers, would be most needed at Augsburg in order to direct the religious discussions. The reason commonly assigned is this—that he was still under the ban, for which reason it was regarded unsafe for him to appear at Augsburg.† This may have had some weight with the elector in his decision to leave him at Coburg; but it is also very probable that there were other reasons. The letter from Augsburg to the elector, assuring him of safe conduct, states that a safe conduct could not be promised any who were under sentence of condemnation, which is generally interpreted to refer to Luther. But surely this

* Seckendorf, p. 1016.

† In a letter dated June 1st Luther himself gives this reason, though it was probably not the only one.

letter was not the occasion for leaving Luther at Coburg, for it was written April 30th, whereas already on the 18th, Luther wrote to a friend that by the command of the elector he was to remain at Coburg.* And in this same letter he states that he does not know the reason why he is left there. Surely, if the reason was merely the fact that it was not safe for him to appear at Augsburg, it could without difficulty have been communicated to him. It was evidently the original intention of the elector to take him along to Augsburg, if the princes were at all allowed to bring their theologians along.† Luther was very anxious to be present at Augsburg, and in June yet hoped to be called there, and even talked of going without being called.‡ He suspected some other reason, as he writes the 24th of April. After stating that he would gladly have gone with the other theologians to Augsburg, he continues "there was however one who said to me, be still, thou hast an evil voice."§ So he was to be silent, because he had an evil voice!

With these facts before him each one can form his own conclusion. It was probably not safe for Luther to appear at Augsburg. His presence would have served to exasperate the Papists still more against the Protestants, and would thus have made the work of peace there to be performed, still more difficult. And every one knew full well that Luther was not the proper person to conduct the negotiations of the Protestants with their enemies for the sake of making peace with them. His boldness, his fire, and his

* Letter to Nic. Hausmann. De Wette MCXCIX. "Ego jussus sum a Principe, ubi alii abierunt ad comitia, Coburgi manere, nescia qua de causa."

† This is evident from the elector's letter to the Wittenberg theologians, March 14. Forstemeaum, I. 48.

‡ De Wette—letters of June 19, and 20, to Cordatus and Jonas. With sad heart he submits to his fate. To Link he writes the 8th of May: "Non ignoro me prorsus inutilem esse in hoc protectione, et domi fortasse plus profecissem docendo: sed resistere not licuit vocanti." The first words are very significant. He felt that he was useless! "What a thought for the man who had thus far been everything."

§ De Wette MCCII. "Sed erat, qui diceret, tace, tu habes malam vocem."

harsh way of stating the truth, might prove a hinderance rather than an aid; might provoke new hostilities rather than pour oil on the troubled waters.* There is no doubt that it was regarded inexpedient to bring him to Augsburg, for Luther was no peacemaker. We cannot, therefore, think that the elector acted imprudently in leaving Luther at Coburg. Perhaps the further developments of the succeeding chapters will make his reasons more evident.

Luther obeyed the elector's command, but his letters from Coburg, some of them dated "from the Wilderness," others from "the region of the birds," indicate that he did it reluctantly. They show plainly that he was not a little apprehensive that his friends at Augsburg might be willing to make too many concessions to their enemies for the sake of peace. For the truth's sake he longed earnestly, but in vain, to be at Augsburg. Indeed, it is doubtful whether the noble stand of this man of God at Worms, cost him as great an effort as the command to be silent during the discussion of the most vital religious subjects at Augsburg.†

Philip of Hesse, who at first thought it inexpedient for the Protestant princes to attend the diet, followed the example of the elector of Saxony, and arrived at Augsburg the 12th, of May, with a retinue of one hundred and twenty horsemen. George, margrave of Brandenburg, did not arrive till near the end of May.

The early and unexpected arrival of the elector at Augs-

* Ruckert in his pamphlet on "Luther's relation to the Augsburg Confession," after carefully examining all the original documents on the subject, comes to this conclusion: "Thus we can hardly conclude otherwise than that his (Luther's) resoluteness and impetuosity could not be used at the supposed negotiations for peace at Augsburg, which were consequently kept at a distance, so that he could exert on them at least no immediate influence." Whether this view is correct or not, Luther's letters make it evident that he felt that his presence was not desired at Augsburg.

† Some, whose prejudices long ago discovered the reason why Luther was left at Coburg and thus elevate them above the necessity of careful inquiry into the real testimony of the original historical documents, may be offended at some of the views expressed above. They think it sacrilegious to speak of expediency as at all entering into the motives of the Confessors, just as if it was not right for them to be wise as serpents. Such persons need no history, since their imagination supplies its place.

burg greatly surprised some of the Papists, who thought he would not at all venture to make his appearance. They tried to persuade the emperor that his intentions must be hostile, and that he would probably attempt to seize his person. The elector of Brandenburg, and George, duke of Saxony, and William, duke of Bavaria, accordingly made Charles an offer of six thousand men to defend himself against all attacks that might be made. But he evidently regarded their fears as groundless, and refused to accept the offer.

The emperor, who was in no hurry, made very slow progress in his journey towards Augsburg.* He thus gained time to mature his plans for the diet and to study the situation. It was important for him to learn the views and the spirit of the different parties, in order that the best means might be devised for the negotiations at the diet. During his long absence from the empire his wars left him but little time to watch the progress of the religious dissensions. As he now entered Germany again, leisure and opportunity were given to study the real nature of the difficulties of which he so often proved himself lamentably ignorant. He spent considerable time at Innsbruck, to which city the Catholic princes and theologians hastened to congratulate the emperor, to welcome him back to Germany, and to use their influence against the Protestants. The reports of their various machinations reached the ears of the princes at Augsburg through the ambassadors they had sent to Innsbruck to greet the emperor in their name. These reports only served to increase the growing fears of the Protestants. In spite of the kind reception of the messengers sent by the elector, to notify the emperor of his arrival at Augsburg, many things indicated that force would be the strongest argument used against them if they remained true to their principles. The Papists who flocked to Innsbruck were unanimously of the opinion that the Protestant religion must be destroyed; but they were by no means agreed as to the best means for securing this end. Some advocated the severest measures

* Lack of money seems to have been one reason for his slow progress. Corp. Ref. II., No. 703.

as the surest and shortest way; and this extreme party was by far the most influential. All the weight of bigotry, prejudice, passion, and self-interest was on their side—allies well worthy of their cause. This party, which represented the true spirit of the papacy, was of course led by some representative of the pope—by the papal legate Campeggio. They were in favor of simply executing the edict of Worms against the Protestants, according to which they were already condemned. No opportunity of stating and defending their doctrines was to be given them; that would have been too much honor, and might have endangered the prospects of these extremists. Others were, however, in favor of giving them a fair opportunity of stating their doctrines, and accordingly advocated a compliance with the proposition made in the emperor's proclamation. The representative of these milder views was Mercurinus Göttinger, the emperor's chancellor. His influence at the court was very great. He acknowledged the need of a reformation of the abuses which had crept into the church, urged the convening of a general council to discuss and decide the religious questions, and was favorably inclined towards the Protestants, who regarded him as their best friend at court and hoped much from his influence. Could he have been present at the diet the result would probably have been very different. He did not, however, reach Augsburg, but died at Innsbruck, the 4th of June, thus giving the most bitter enemies of the Reformation still greater influence with the emperor.*

* Melancthon in his letter to Luther, May 22d, says: "It is reported that in the council of the emperor two opinions prevail; one is, that he should not at all hear the Lutherans, but should condemn them at once in an edict; the other, that he should give them a fair hearing, and abolish the abuses in the church. It is reported that the emperor's chancellor, Mercurinus, an excellent, modest, and powerful man, is of the latter opinion, who should have said that in his present weakness [ill health], he accompanied the emperor chiefly because he supposed that the religious questions would be settled favorably. As far as he was concerned he did not want to take part in blood-thirsty counsel and intention. We have heard nothing here which, in our opinion, is more worthy of being written. In the speech and opinion of this very sensible and wise man I take special delight. May Christ have compassion on us, and

Charles himself was less inclined to use force against the Protestants than many of his counselors. He needed them in the war with the Turks, and wanted to win them back by peaceable means. Understanding their spirit, their motives, their deep conscientious convictions, and firm principles as little as their doctrines, he expected to accomplish much by means of threats and promises. He tried to induce the elector of Saxony to visit him at Innsbruck. There, before the diet opened, influences might be brought to bear on him with greater power than any that could be used at Augsburg. A great point would have been gained by Charles if in some way he could have settled the religious questions without the excitement of a discussion at the diet. And if the elector could be brought back to Rome, the emperor thought the other princes might also easily be won or subdued. The letter in which the elector declined the invitation with great firmness and determination, must have shaken the emperor's hopes to win him by promises, or overawe him with threats. The prince justly feared that unjust means would be used to induce him to renounce his faith, and that efforts would be made to settle the religious question privately, without giving the Protestants a fair and public hearing.

It is hard for rulers whose faith rests on the authority of others, who are continually influenced by rules of expediency, and are constantly surrounded by men of policy, to appreciate and understand men who are controlled by principle and whose religion is a matter of experience. Charles was very slow to learn the real nature of the faith of the Lutherans, which God's Spirit had created, and which He controlled. Long before he reached Augsburg he received many evidences that his triumph there over the few Protestant princes would be less easy than he expected. The preachers of these princes frequently preached in Augsburg, which was a source of great dissatisfaction to the Papists. Were they not there to be condemned? And yet they

keep us, and govern all counsels so that they may promote peace and the common welfare. It is reported that this same Mercurinus said, that at Worms it became evident that nothing effectual could be accomplished by violent counsels; for he was in the emperor's court and counsel at Worms."

boldly proclaimed their doctrine, away from their own countries, in the emperor's city! The fact was reported to the emperor who requested the elector henceforth to prevent the preaching of the gospel in Augsburg. He feared that contentions would arise between the preachers of the opposite parties; that the minds would become excited, and that thus the road to peace would be made more difficult. The right to preach their doctrines, seemed to imply that they were regarded as true, whereas that was the very question which the diet was to decide.

The elector asked the advice of the theologians and secular counselors. Luther's respect for the properly constituted authorities was such that he advised submission to their commands whenever this could be done without coming in direct conflict with duty to God. His views on this subject were formed from his interpretation of Rom. 13. The advice he gave on the subject of preaching at Augsburg, shows that he regarded the emperor's command as authoritative. And whether we agree with his views or not, they at least prove that, with all his decision, he was far removed from that spirit of fanaticism so common in times of great excitement, in great crises, and so common too in his day. His was the calm courage which the Gospel inculcates, not the reckless temerity which blind passion engenders. As a matter of duty he advised the princes to prevent their preachers from publicly proclaiming the Gospel at Augsburg. He argued that the city belonged to the emperor, not to them, and that it was their duty to obey his commands. And afterwards, when the preaching was positively forbidden, Luther praised the elector for submitting to the superior authority of the emperor. Melanchthon's views coincided with those of Luther.

But Bruck, the elector's chancellor, and other counselors advised him not to yield to the request of the emperor. Bruck thought that Charles only wanted to see, at the very outset, how far he could induce them to yield. He accordingly advised firmness and decision as the best way of meeting the emperor's demands, so that whatever their fears might be, their enemies should see only their determination to defend the truth. Firmness now would have the best effect, whereas if they yielded in this important matter, more

and still more concessions might be demanded or extorted from them.* This advice the elector followed in preference to that of his theologians. In the same letter in which he declined the invitation to meet the emperor at Innsbruck he also gave his reasons for not complying with the request to prevent the preaching of the gospel,† stating that nothing but God's word was preached, that the preaching was not calculated to excite controversy, that the Word was much needed, and that it would be contrary to their convictions of duty to forbid its preaching. Thus the determination of the Protestants in this matter, which was prophetic of a still greater determination during their stay at Augsburg, became apparent to their enemies, who were not a little indignant that, in spite of all threats, they fearlessly preached their doctrines. And all efforts of the emperor to prevent this preaching before his arrival at Augsburg, utterly failed.

But whilst the boldness of the Protestants thus became evident, they on the other hand learned from the words and conduct of the emperor that the mild tone of his proclamation did not express his real intentions. He repeatedly manifested his dissatisfaction with the course pursued by the elector of Saxony, upbraiding him for having neglected the execution of the edict of Worms, for associating with heretics and affording them protection.‡ But as the hopes of the Protestants became dim those of their opponents grew brighter. And while the former looked with apprehension to the result of the diet, the latter were confident of the entire success of their cause.

* Förstemann I. 183.

† Förstemann I. 224.

‡ The harshness of the emperor on various occasions, was probably owing more to the fact that his counselors were so bitter than to his real desire to treat the Protestants with severity. They at least thought him much more kindly disposed to them than his surroundings. Luther in a letter to Jonas says of him: "He is pious and kind, but is surrounded by many devils." And in a letter to Spalatin: "I believe, as you all do, that the emperor is a pious and kind lord; but I have no hope that he will be gracious to our cause, however much he might desire to be so. For what can one man do against so many devils? Therefore God alone is our refuge."

The delay of the emperor severely tried the patience of the evangelical princes at Augsburg. Away from their homes and their lands, subject to many inconveniences, and with heavy expenses, they were heartily tired of their long and useless waiting. Whatever the result of the deliberations might be, they wanted to know it as soon as possible. The stay of the emperor at Innsbruck long after the time designated for the opening of the diet, made it seem as if there, rather than at Augsburg, the diet was to be held. Finally the court moved from that city, and on the 15th of June, the emperor entered Augsburg with much pomp and ceremony.* Immediately after reaching his lodgings, in the palace of the bishop of Augsburg, he dismissed all except the Protestant princes. The emperor again requested them to prevent their ministers from preaching.⁴⁷ And as the next day was Corpus Christi, on which it was intended to have a grand procession and make a great display, they were asked to join the procession. George, margrave of Brandenburg, replied in their name, that they could not comply with these requests without violating their consciences.⁴⁸ When, however, the emperor insisted that they must comply, the same bold and noble champion of the truth replied in these heroic words: "Rather than deny my God and His Gospel, I would kneel down before your imperial majesty and (raising his hand and passing it over his throat) let my head be cut off." This firm adherence to a conviction of duty moved the emperor who, with a gracious mein, replied in low German: "Dear prince, not head off, not head off,⁴⁹† and dismissed them with permission to consider the matter till the next morning.⁵⁰

Their reply the next day was again given by the margrave, and was worthy of themselves and their cause. In the most positive manner they declined joining the procession in which the host was carried and worshiped, regarding the whole affair as contrary to Scripture and as idolatrous. Nor could they by any means be induced to change their determination; and none of them joined the

* For the description of the emperor's entrance, written at that time, see Förstemann I. 258.

† Seckendorf 1034. "Loever Först, nit Kop ab, nit Kop ab."

procession, which was consequently much less imposing than was anticipated.

The margrave also gave their reasons for not complying with the other request, to prevent the preaching of the gospel. He said: "In respect to this matter, which concerns God himself, I am obliged by God's unalterable command to oppose this request, whatever danger may result therefrom; for it is written: 'We ought to obey God rather than men.' For the sake of confessing the doctrine which I know to be the voice of the Son of God and the immovable, eternal truth, I do not refuse to subject myself to any danger, even that of losing life itself, to which danger I understand those are exposed who have adopted the pure doctrines."* 50

But as the emperor had failed to induce them to join the procession, he was determined to prevent their theologians from preaching. For the present they were, however, dismissed, with the request to give their reasons the next day in writing. In the document presented the next day, they gave their reasons in full, claiming that the gospel was as necessary to them as their daily bread, and that as the emperor in his proclamation had intimated that both parties were to be heard, if the preaching of the gospel was prevented it would seem as if their cause was already condemned without being heard.‡ These reasons were considered by the emperor, who then decided that the preachers of both parties should be silent, and that no one should be allowed to preach except such ministers as were appointed by himself.† This decision was publicly proclaimed on the 19th of June, by an imperial herald. The Protestant preachers were thus compelled to refrain from preaching not only in the churches but also at the lodgings of the princes.‡ The preachers appointed by the emperor were of

* Seckendorf, 1035.

† In a writing found in Foerstemann, dated June 17th, Melancthon advised compliance with the emperor's request. The unanimous opinion of the theologians was that their preachers should remain silent, if silence was also observed by the other party. The Lutheran ministers preached for the last time on the Sunday after the emperor's arrival.

‡ The elector, writing to Luther on the subject, says: "God must

course all Papists whose sermons were too meagre to satisfy hearts yearning for the truth of God's Word.

All things were now ready for the beginning of the diet which was opened on Monday, the 20th of June. The members were ordered to appear on the morning of that day at the emperor's palace. Before the commencement of business mass was celebrated. At this ceremony the Protestants were present, and the elector of Saxony, as grand marshal of the empire, bore the sword before the emperor; yet they stated before appearing that they did not regard the ceremonies of the mass as in any way concerning them. On this as on other occasions, when they yielded to the wishes of the emperor to do what seemed inconsistent with their profession, they declared that they did it because the emperor commanded it, and not because they sanctioned the thing itself. The pope's nuncio, Pimpinelli, delivered an address in Latin on this occasion, in which, after speaking of the depredations of the Turks, he also briefly referred to the religious difficulties. He represented the Germans as actually worse than the Turks on account of their religious dissensions and heresies, and made the severest, and altogether unfounded, charges against the Protestants.* After the delivery of this oration the emperor

thus be silent during the diet. But in this matter we do not so much blame the pious emperor as our enemies and those who are opposed to the preachers of the Gospel." From the course of the emperor in this affair Luther drew the inference that the results of the diet would be very unfavorable for their cause. Writing to Eisleben on the subject he says: "This is my conclusion, that the diet will end in such a manner that the emperor will want to compel our gracious lord (the elector) to abandon the whole doctrine. The hopes based on the kindness of the emperor are vain. I think the pope and the bishops have persuaded the emperor to hear our case so that, after hearing our defence, although they will form what conclusion they please, they may nevertheless boast that they have sufficiently listened to us, and may thus more plausibly blame our obstinacy as if we had been sufficiently heard and admonished, and still refused to obey the emperor." Seckendorf, 1040.

* Some of the Papists themselves were displeased with the severe language used. The elector of Mentz is reported to have been offended especially at these words of the nuncio: "If Peter cannot open the strong hearts of the Germans with the keys, then let Paul strike at them with his sword." Seckendorf, 1043.

and the members of the diet proceeded to the Townhall (Rathhaus), in which the sessions were to be held. The emperor took his seat on a throne which was covered with a cloth of gold; near him sat his brother, King Ferdinand, whilst around him were seated four electors, forty-two princes, and the various deputies from imperial cities, and the ambassadors. The imperial proposition* was read by palsgrave Frederick, in which the object of the diet was stated to be twofold, to provide means for prosecuting the war against the Turks, and to put an end to the religious dissensions. The emperor complains in this proposition that the edict of Worms, which was intended to settle the religious disputes, had not been complied with, and also of the dangers and disturbances which had originated in the doctrinal controversies, but especially of the war of the peasants and the excesses of the Anabaptists. With reference to the settling of these disputes the emperor declares it to be his intentions to investigate the matter diligently and kindly, and he exhorts all to do their utmost to aid him in putting an end to these dissensions. The proposition states: "His imperial majesty earnestly and graciously requests the electors and states, in accordance with the proclamation, to prepare and present in German and Latin their sentiments, opinions, and views, respecting the controversies between the secular and ecclesiastical authorities, or among themselves." After the reading of the proposition the elector of Brandenburg, in the name of the diet, thanked the emperor for the address, and requested a copy of the same, in order that it might be taken into consideration.

Whilst this proposition presented for deliberation the same subjects originally stated in the proclamation, its tone was far less friendly. The blame of the religious dissensions and of their disastrous results was thrown on the Protestants. They had not executed the decisions of the diet at Worms, therefore they were the guilty party. Perhaps the aim of the proclamation, with its extremely mild language, was to draw the Protestants to Augsburg; when once there the emperor might hope to intimidate them by

* Foerstemann I. 295, gives the entire proposition. See also Cyprian, 55. Seckendorf, 1045.

means of threats and reproaches. Certain it is that the bearing of Charles towards the Protestants when he entered Augsburg, as well as the addresses delivered at the opening of the diet, were less calculated to win the confidence of the Evangelical party than to assure them that nothing but severity could be expected, unless they yielded to the wishes of the majority.

Whilst bright prospects elevate, strengthen, and cheer the soul of the Christian, difficulties, and discouragements, and gloom humble that soul, and, throwing it on God for support, cultivate, not only its patience and resignation, but also its trust in God and intimate and deep communion with Him. The mount of transfiguration may have its glories, but Gethsemane and Calvary reveal more of the soul's depths. The unfavorable circumstances in which the Protestants were placed at the very beginning of the diet, called for the full exercise of that faith for which they contended. A mere handful themselves, with a powerful majority, which controlled the emperor, bitterly opposed to them, their only hope was in that God whose cause they were defending. If the majority, with perfect confidence of success, relying on their own strength, were haughty and arrogant, the Protestants were humble without cringing; were earful, yet courageous and determined; were weak, and yet strong in God. Cheerfully we accord to them that glory which belongs to the few struggling nobly against fearful odds, for right and truth. And if at times they hesitated, or their faith seemed for a moment to waver, we must remember that they were human, and that almost superhuman powers were needed to endure what they were called on to endure. To appreciate their great work, their heroic firmness, and the debt we owe them for preparing for us so goodly a heritage, ~~we~~ must place ourselves in their position and must judge them according to the times and circumstances. ~

On the afternoon of the same day on which the imperial proposition was read the elector of Saxony invited the other Lutherans to his rooms and earnestly exhorted them to be firm in defending God's cause and the true doctrines, in spite of the threats of their enemies. The increasing discouragements made this mutual encouragement of each

other the more necessary, especially since they were now deprived of the encouragements given by the preached Word. The Papists might satisfy their spiritual need by dazzling spectacles, by processions, and the ceremonies of the mass; the Protestants needed prayer, and in it they sought and found refuge. Secret prayer, the Christian's holy of holies, is specially adapted to prepare a man in great emergencies to receive unmoved the severest shocks, as the solid rock is beaten but not disturbed by the waves. The morning after the opening of the diet the elector dismissed all his attendants, for the purpose of spending the time in secret prayer and meditation. The work to be done was God's work, and the leader of God's co-laborers must consult Him about its performance. He needed special grace as the most influential among them, as the one to whom the others looked for support and guidance. On the afternoon of that day he again assembled his allies in the faith, for the purpose of considering the imperial proposition and what course to pursue.* Their utmost reliance on God was connected with the greatest efforts on their part to devise the best means to secure the desired end; they prayed and worked, they planned and trusted. The next day, the 22d of June, they again met and decided not to consent to the transaction of any business until the religious question had been discussed. As a similar resolution was formed by the other party, it was decided in the diet to take up the religious question first, and after that to provide means for prosecuting the war against the Turks, a very judicious arrangement, since the latter would greatly depend on the disposition made of the former.

Before proceeding with the history of the diet we shall first investigate the origin of that confession which gives the diet its greatest historical importance.

* Before the other evangelical princes were assembled the elector himself alone considered the proposition, and then with the prince electoral, chancellor Bruck, and Melancthon. Seck. 1046.





CHAPTER II.

THE GENESIS OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION.

Men are often led to results which they do not aim at and could not possibly foresee. Whilst at times we fail to accomplish as much as we desire, at others we accomplish much more than we intend or dare to hope. All history and our daily experience prove to a demonstration that however free we may be in our choices and actions, the results of these are not under our control. Many windings of our course are mysterious, and the terminus of many a path we tread is unknown. This unconscious guidance through devious ways to unexpected results, may be called accidental by men of the world, but the Christian calls it providential. The power that leads us may be called Fate by the heathen, and Chance by the infidel; the Christian regards it as none other than God. "Man proposes; God disposes."

The history of the Reformation, from the nailing of the Theses on the door of the castle-church at Wittenberg till the church of Christ was fully emancipated from its Babylonian captivity, is pregnant with illustrations of this divine guidance and control. It was a period in which God's hand was specially visible in so shaping events as to accomplish his plans. The Reformation was less intended by Luther and the other reformers than by God himself; and with truth it may be said, that often their works were less their own than the works of God. But whilst thus distinctly acknowledging a divine agency in the great work of that period, it would be wrong to deny that there was also a human element in it, with human passion and weakness, and liability to error. And whilst cheerfully admitting that God worked through those great men to accomplish

his purposes, it would be a dangerous error to regard all their doctrines and deeds as those of God himself. And if our reverence for these heroes of the faith, and our prejudices so blind us that we cannot see their faults or reject their errors, we make as great a mistake as the Papist who regards the decisions of certain individuals or the Romish church as infallible.

The great Confession is one of those many products of the Reformation, which were not made according to a certain pattern so that at the commencement of the work it could be stated definitely what the result would be. Much that was at first obscure became clear and definite as the work progressed. Nor were the events happening at that time without their influence on the matter and form of the Confession. Whilst it was being prepared with a special end in view, circumstances had much to do in determining how best to adapt it to this end.

Interesting and important as the genesis of the Augsburg Confession is, it is a subject of considerable difficulty, and one that must be handled with great care. Not only is a careful and thorough investigation of the original documents, that bear on this subject, necessary, but this investigation must be conducted with proper principles. All prejudice must be laid aside. The documents that are decisive must be allowed to speak their own language, whether that agrees with our preconceived notions or not. Deprecating every attempt to torture these testimonies so as to suit our views, we must come to them as learners, earnestly desiring to know the truth for its own sake, willing to reject every erroneous opinion previously formed, however long it may have been cherished, however dear it may be. At the very outset of the investigation we must, therefore, sternly set our faces against the many prejudices which already exist, and are so easily excited on this subject. Pantheism, making history merely so many logical syllogisms, may determine beforehand what must necessarily and logically happen, and then shape the facts of history to suit its notions; but this is making history conform to our notions of what in our opinion it must be, not forming our views of history according to the facts. The Christian who lets his prejudices determine the facts of history, com-

mits the same error as the infidel who decides that he will investigate the Scriptures, but will not believe anything that is miraculous or supernatural.

There are two classes of prejudices which must be carefully avoided in this investigation. There are those who are the avowed enemies of the Confession, who consequently are continually misinterpreting the Confession itself, as well as impugning the motives that led to its formation. They seek not facts, but attacks against the Confession; and when they cannot find, they invent them. The opposite error is just as great, and should be as carefully guarded against, that of those whose unbounded admiration for the Confession will let them see in its history nothing but what will redound to its glory. Their views of history are rather an invention than a discovery of facts, rather the result of imagination than investigation. With the most malignant spirit, fostered by prejudice, bigotry, and intolerance, they attack in the most unchristian manner all who from candid investigation come to conclusions which do not suit their fancy. Disgracing themselves, their profession, and their cause, by their unreasonable and wicked course; perverting facts, and mutilating historical documents to gain their ends, they prove themselves utterly unworthy of all regard. We may pity, but we cannot excuse them. History is not for such. Facts are less unyielding than their prejudices. And the lover of truth, who does not want to make history a liar, must carefully avoid their error and must disregard their violent opposition to impartial inquiry.

But another caution is necessary. We must not only be careful to have authentic documents, and to investigate them thoroughly and without prejudice; we must also be careful not to form our conclusions too hastily, from a few or from insufficient facts. It is only by comparing all the facts in the case that a correct conclusion can be formed. And we have reason to congratulate ourselves that the documents bearing on the subject are so numerous and so clear, that the history of the Confession is not mere guess-work.

Guided by these principles, we shall now enter into an investigation of the Genesis of the Confession. According to the proclamation of the emperor, the religious dissensions were to be investigated at the diet to be held at Augs-

burg, with the view of restoring peace and unity to the distracted church. As this was for the Protestants by far the most important object of the diet, they at once agitated the question how this part of the proclamation could best be complied with by them? On the manner of presenting their views, whether in writing or orally, nothing was said in the proclamation. Bruck, chancellor of the elector of Saxony, advised that the views held by them, together with Scripture proofs, should be prepared in writing, since it was not probable that they would be allowed to argue the questions orally before the diet. The views thus prepared in writing would, he thought, also be less liable to misunderstanding.* This view was adopted by the elector. On the 11th of March he received the proclamation, and the 14th of the same month he sent a copy of it to the Wittenberg theologians, Luther, Jonas, Pomeranus, and Melanchthon,† and also a letter, in which he requested them, since the diet would probably take the place of a general council or national assembly, to draw up articles on those doctrines, ceremonies and practices on which there was any dispute. As it was expected that the diet would meet in a few weeks, they were ordered to let every thing else alone, prepare the articles at once, and bring them to the elector at Torgau on the 21st of the month.

The articles prepared on this occasion are commonly called the Torgau articles, from the name of the place at which they were presented to the elector. As they were lost their real nature was not understood by historians. It was generally supposed that the theologians merely took the Schwabach articles and presented them at Torgau, for which reason they were called the Torgau articles. This view is, however, erroneous. For the Schwabach articles were only doctrinal, and only indicated what the Lutherans believed, while the elector requested the Wittenberg theologians to prepare articles showing the difference between them and the Papists both in doctrine and practice; so that the presentation of the Schwabach articles would not have been in compliance with the elector's request, nor would

* Förstemann I. 89.

† Förstemann I. 42. Corp. Ref. II. No. 671.

those articles have answered his purpose. When the elector's letter reached Wittenberg, Luther at once wrote to Jonas, who was absent at the time, to come home immediately and assist in preparing the articles requested by the elector; surely this would have been unnecessary, if the Schwabach articles, which were already prepared, were to be presented at Torgau. And the elector, writing to Luther from Augsburg, May 11th, speaks of the Torgau articles as the articles on doctrines on which there is controversy, and which the theologians had prepared at Wittenberg. It is thus beyond all question that the Torgau articles were not the same as the Schwabach, and it is a wonder how, for so many ages, the error could be propagated.*

In the archives at Weimar, Förstemann at last discovered what he supposed to be the original Torgau articles,† and there can be but little doubt that he is right. They treat of those subjects on which there was controversy, and thus complied with the elector's request.‡ But even if there could be doubt that these are really the Torgau articles, there can be none that they were used in preparing the Confession. Their contents make this evident. They form the basis of the second part of the Confession, the articles on abuses. But whilst they were evidently used for this part of the Confession, they were neither copied nor slavishly imitated, but were used with the freedom to alter, reject, or add whatever was thought best.

* This is only one instance of the many and wide-spread errors respecting the history of the Augsburg Confession. An error once started is afterwards taken for granted and circulated as truth. The above error is still current among men who follow the authority of those who wrote histories of the Confession before this error was exploded.

† Found in his *Urkundenbuch*, I. 66.

‡ Förstemann found these articles with Bruck's manuscripts on the religious discussions at Augsburg. There are six different papers, perhaps by different authors. The subjects treated are such as these: "Traditions of men; Marriage of priests; both elements in the Eucharist; Mass; Confession, etc., etc." If all six of these papers, which discuss the same or similar subjects, are not the Torgau articles, it is probable that at least one of them is; although it cannot with certainty be determined which one. Förstemann, I. 66—108. Also 41 and 450.

From the elector's letter to the Wittenberg theologians it is evident that the original intention was not to present a complete confession of the faith of the Protestants, but simply to prepare articles on the disputed points; that is, such articles chiefly as are found in the second part of the Confession. And had the diet assembled at the time appointed by the emperor, there is no doubt that the Augsburg Confession would have consisted entirely or chiefly of such articles, for such were the articles asked for by the elector; the articles presented at Torgau satisfied him and were of this nature; and it was his intention to use them at the diet. For this purpose Melanchthon was requested to write a preface for them, which he did at Coburg, on his journey from Torgau to Augsburg.*

If articles on controverted points only had been presented at Augsburg, it would of course have been taken for granted that on other points the Protestants agreed with the Papists. But the worst slanders respecting the Protestants were circulated, charging them with the grossest errors, even with atheism. These charges could best be refuted by clearly stating their views, not only on the disputed points, but on all the great doctrines of Christianity. The delay of the emperor at Innsbruck till long after the time appointed for the opening of the diet, gave ample time for preparing a full statement of their doctrines on controverted as well as on other important points.

The basis of the articles on abuses was found in the Torgau articles. But what articles or documents lie at the basis of the doctrinal articles?

Shortly before the preparation of the Confession, doctrinal articles had on various occasions been prepared by the Protestants. Philip, landgrave of Hesse, sincerely regretting the dissensions between the Lutherans and Zwinglians, which he thought were unnecessary and injurious to

* May 4th, Melanchthon wrote to Luther: "I have made the preface to our Apology more rhetorical than I had written it at Coburg. I will bring it to you soon, or, if the elector will not permit this, will send it." During its preparation, and even afterwards sometimes, the Confession was commonly called the Apology. This must not be mistaken for the Apology afterwards written by Melanchthon.

the cause of the gospel, attempted to restore peace and form a union between them. For this purpose he appointed a conference at Marburg, in October, 1529, at which the Wittenberg theologians and Zwingli and some of his adherents were present.* After violent disputes, which served rather to widen than to heal the breach, especially on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, the landgrave, though failing in his aim at union, requested that articles should be prepared which both parties could sign. Luther with the assistance of other theologians prepared fifteen articles, which were signed by both Lutherans and Zwinglians. From the place at which they were prepared and signed they were called the Marburg articles.

Whilst the langrave was thus attempting to form a union between the different branches of the Protestant family, the elector of Saxony and the margrave of Brandenburg met at Schleiz,† to devise means for forming a union to protect themselves against any attacks that might be made by the Papists. As their object was to defend what they regarded as the pure doctrines of the gospel, they wanted no one to be admitted into the proposed union who did not agree with them doctrinally. Luther and the other Wittenberg theologians were accordingly requested by the elector to prepare articles of faith as the doctrinal basis of the alliance, which articles were to be presented at a meeting to be held in Schwabach, in October, 1529. The Marburg articles had just been prepared, but as the Zwinglians as well as the Lutherans could adopt them, they would not do for the new alliance since the former were to be excluded. They were, however, used in preparing the articles for the Schwabach convention. All in them that looked like concessions to the Zwinglians, was rejected,‡ and such additions were made as the occasion, for which they were prepared, seemed to demand. Seventeen articles were thus prepared which were presented (but not adopted because the dele-

* Besides others the following theologians were present: Luther, Melancthon, Jonas, Osiander, Agricola, Brentz, Oecolampad, Zwingli, Bucer and Hedio.

† Seckendorf, 966. Heppe, *Altprotestantische Kirche*, p. 46.

‡ Heppe, p. 47.

gates from Strasburg and Ulm refused to accept them) at Schwabach, and hence were called the Schwabach articles.* Their subjects are: 1, The Trinity; 2, The Incarnation; 3, The Sufferings and Death of Jesus; 4, Original Sin; 5, Justification; 6, The Nature of justifying Faith; 7, The Preaching of the Gospel; 8, The Sacraments; 9, Baptism; 10, The Lord's Supper; 11, Private Confession; 12, The Church; 13, The Last Judgment; 14, Human Government; 15, The Marriage of Priests, forbidding meats, vows; 16, Mass; 17, Ceremonies in general.

Between these articles, the subjects discussed, their arrangement, their contents, and the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession, there is much similarity. Sometimes the words as well as the ideas are the same. But the differences are such that the Augsburg Confession can by no means be regarded as merely an expansion of the Schwabach articles. Some points discussed in the latter are not at all referred to in the former; whilst on the other hand the former contains much that is not referred to in the latter. Sometimes the latter are expanded, at others additions are made to them, sometimes parts are entirely rejected. The statements that would do for a union of Lutherans, would not so well answer the purpose of the Augsburg Confession. Nevertheless it is beyond question, that just as the Torgau articles were used in preparing the articles on abuses, so the Schwabach articles were used in preparing the doctrinal articles of the Confession, not slavishly, but with freedom. And they, of all the works used, exerted the greatest influence in forming the doctrinal articles of the Confession.†

These Schwabach articles were secretly published by some person, contrary to the desire of the Protestants who wanted them as well as the object of the convention, for which they were prepared, kept a secret. Conrad Wimpina

* See Appendix, A.

† Weber in his "Kritische Geschichte der Augsburg Confess." vol. 1, p. 18, thinks that both the Marburg and Schwabach were embraced in the Torgau articles, because traces of both are found in the Augsburg Confession. This fact is, however, better accounted for by the views given above, without resorting to an opinion for which there is no historical evidence.

and several other Catholic theologians at Augsburg republished them with notes, during the diet, ascribing them to Luther, as the Confession which he had prepared for the diet. Thereupon Luther himself published the articles with a preface, in which he denies that they were prepared for the diet, or by himself alone, though he acknowledges that he helped to prepare them.*

When it was decided by the elector of Saxony to prepare articles for the diet, there was not only no definite plan agreed upon, but there was also no concert of action between the various Lutheran princes and cities. Instead of preparing but one confession, therefore, different ones were prepared by the princes and cities, with the intention of presenting them to the diet. But the superiority of the confession prepared by order of the elector, gave it the preference, and as it was thought that by presenting but one confession their unity would be shown, and that their united testimony would be stronger than if each presented a separate confession, it was concluded to present but one. All these documents prepared for the diet were, however, taken into consideration in preparing the Augsburg Confession.† And while the Schwabach and Torgau articles must be regarded as the principal works out of which that Confession grew; these other documents mentioned, and perhaps others unknown to us, were also used in its preparation.

Every great work is the product of an age or of ages, and not merely of a single individual. It is but the result of much that preceded, preparing the way for it. This is true especially of the Augsburg Confession. It is really the product of the entire Reformation up to that period, and not merely of 1530. It is the fruit of the good seed that had been sown since 1517, the focus into which were concentrated the rays emanating from God's Word since that time. The writings of Luther and Melancthon and other reformers, before this time, sustain to the Confession the same relation as flowers to the ripe fruit. Had they not preceded it, the Confession could not have been what

* "War ist's dass ich solche artickel hab stellen helfen (denn sie sind nit von mir allein gestellet)."

† Cyprian 65. Seckendorf 1042.

it is. Whilst thus regarding certain documents as those that exerted the greatest influence in the preparation of the Confession, we must nevertheless regard the entire doctrinal work of the reformation till 1530, as but the cause of which the Confession was the effect.

While thus so intimately connected with other works, the Confession must nevertheless be regarded as a new work, differing from all that preceded it. It is not a mere compilation, not mere patchwork, but the result of a great mind which, by freely using as aids certain given materials, and by working them over, by rejecting some parts and adding others, produced a new work with real organic unity. It would be wrong to say that the Confession is original in the same sense that a poet's creation is original, or a new system of philosophy, or new discoveries in science are original. But it is as truly original as the work produced by the historian, who takes given facts as a basis from which he writes his history, or as the work of the theologian, who takes the doctrines of the Bible and forms them into a system of divinity. The Augsburg Confession may, in one sense, be said to have many authors, for many exerted more or less influence on its formation. But it must, on the other hand, be regarded as the work of one man, who used the material given, and with the advice of friends, prepared the Confession. We cannot, indeed, regard him as the absolute originator or creator of the work; nor is he merely the editor or compiler; but in the sense indicated above we must regard him as the author. And it is a question of no little interest and importance which we must now answer: Who is the author of the Augsburg Confession?

We cannot answer this question by citing the views of modern writers on the subject, for they are not authoritative. We must go back to the very times when the Confession was written; and the documents which are authoritative are so abundant and clear as to leave no doubt on the subject, and their evidence must be regarded as decisive, even if it conflicts with our preconceived and cherished notions, or with the prevalent views on the subject.

The emperor's delay in coming to Augsburg gave ample time for the preparation of other than the Torgau articles,

which the elector had intended for the diet. The period from the arrival of the elector at Augsburg till the reading of the Confession, from May 2d till June 25th, seven weeks, was spent in preparing the Augsburg Confession. This work was committed to Melanchthon.* On the journey to Augsburg the work of preparing a preface for the Torgau articles was performed by him, and probably also at that time, or before, he was charged with the work of bringing these articles themselves into another form, since, being prepared in a hurry, they would need revision and perhaps alteration.† The ample time given him not only enabled him to revise these articles, but to prepare a new work which was afterwards called the Augsburg Confession. He was, however, aided by the advice of the other Protestant theologians at Augsburg, of whom there were fourteen.‡ Besides these, the secular counselors of the princes also took part in its preparation,§ especially Bruck. The Confession which was

* Niemyer: Melanchthon im Jahre der Augsb. Conf., p. 22, (Schmidt's Life of Melanchthon, p. 234,) contains the following extract from Melanchthon's letter to his brother George, written from Augsburg: "The work of composing the Confession, which is to be presented to the emperor and the States, is committed to me. * * * Other theologians wanted to compose the Confession; would to God their desire had been granted. Perhaps they could have done it better. Now they are dissatisfied with mine and want it changed."

† It is highly probable that before the journey to Augsburg was commenced, it was decided at the court of the elector that the articles should be brought into another form. Perhaps the theologians themselves at Torgau requested this and gave the work into the hands of Melanchthon. Melanchthon at least commenced the work on the journey. Planck: Geschichte d. Entstehung d. prot. Lehrbegriffs, vol. III. part 1, p. 41.

‡ Matthes in his Symbolik, p. 65, note, says: that in preparing the Confession no one assisted Melanchthon. This is however too sweeping a remark. Although Melanchthon composed the Confession, others aided him with their advice, as the cotemporary documents clearly show.

§ This fact is stated by Schnepff (Cyprian 66), one of the theologians brought to Augsburg by the landgrave of Hesse. And the delegates from Nuremberg in their report of May 24th (Corp. Ref. II. No. 700), state that the old chancellor Bruck had the articles and was arranging some parts. And, indeed, it would have been strange if all the Protestant princes, counselors and theologians at Augsburg, had not taken a lively interest in the work and aided in it as much as was in their power.

to have a political as well as religious significance, therefore, received assistance from politicians as well as theologians. But whilst others thus aided Melanchthon by their advice and suggestions, he was really the author of the Augsburg Confession. At Augsburg he was universally regarded as the author. Luther also regards him as the author and calls the Confession: "Master Philip's Apology." Melanchthon claimed to be the author, and treated the Confession exactly as he did all his other works. Nor were his claims disputed during the Reformation. That he is beyond all question the author will become still more evident from the succeeding pages.*

But what part did Luther take in the preparation of the Confession? He had been the very life of the Reformation and the leader in every important act. His position was such that he was entitled to take the most prominent part in preparing the confessions of the Evangelical church, especially the greatest of all, the Augs-

* Schmidt, in his *Life of Melanchthon* (German), p. 207, says: "Although it (the Confession) was considered by all the theologians present; although the political counselors and delegates gave their advice, and especially the Saxon chancellor knew how to arrange it 'behind and before' (hinten und vornen daran, zu formen'), it was nevertheless quite peculiarly Melanchthon's work and belongs to the best he ever wrote."

Brentz, one of the Lutheran theologians at Augsburg, is an important authority respecting the authorship of the Confession. Being in constant intercourse with the Protestants, he had the very best opportunity for knowing the genesis of that document. He frequently wrote to his colleague Isenmann, in Hall, about the progress of affairs in Augsburg. The intimate friend and associate of Melanchthon at this critical period, does not try, with Melanchthon's enemies, to deprive him of the just title of author of the Confession; but actually calls him the author. June 24th, the day before the Confession was presented, writing to Isenmann, he says: "*Conscriptimus enim auctore Philippo Melanchthone epitomen doctrinæ nostræ, idque valde civilite et. modeste.*" Corp. Ref. II. No. 735. Luther, in a letter to Hausmann, July 6th, calls the Confession "Confessionem nostram quam Philippus noster paravit."

The fact that Melanchthon was the author of the Confession explains the reason why the preparation of the Apology of the Confession was committed to him. The Confession and the Apology have the same author; and surely it would have been very strange if the preparation of the Apology had been committed to any one else than the author of the Confession.

burg Confession. As this afterwards became the great symbol of the church which bears his name, many took it for granted that he was the author of the Confession, or at least took a very active part in its preparation. Such views are all the more willingly adopted if prejudice and party interest favor them. The authorship of the Confession cannot affect its inherent value; its truth depends not on the circumstances connected with its origin. But many who prate loudly about the authority of the Confession and violently berate all who do not with them swear unconditionally on the same symbol, show how weak their faith in the sterling Gospel truth and intrinsic merits of the Confession, by continually running hither and thither to find or invent, external authority to bolster up their faith in the greatest symbol of the Protestant church.* They need Luther's great name as a prop for their faith, and they make it a foregone conclusion that somehow he must be the author of the Confession, and that this must be taken for granted even if historical facts are against them.

One who carefully examines the facts in the case, must be greatly surprised at the erroneous views on this subject, both in Europe and America. And so firmly are these opinions rooted in the mind that even when the truth is

* The real value of the Confession and its glory consist in its intrinsic excellence, in the truth it contains. The circumstances connected with its origin and its subsequent history can add nothing to its real value, nor can they detract therefrom. The truth has its glory in itself, just as God, the Author of truth, is glorious, whether men recognize his glory or not. The glory of the Augsburg Confession is in its truth; and this truth is not at all affected by the estimate of men. We may therefore claim that the history of the Confession cannot in the least either augment or diminish the excellence and value of the Confession itself. This very fact should lead the most ardent admirer of the Confession, and its most bitter enemy, to an impartial investigation of its history. And the way some men torture, pervert and suppress facts, for the purpose of making its history seem glorious, excites the suspicion, that they have but little confidence in the real excellence of the Confession, and that they feel that their perversions of history are needed to give it an excellence. The man who has confidence in the truth of the Confession, and whose sole aim is to make that truth triumphant, can afford to be impartial in investigating the history of the Confession.

discovered it is unwelcome and hard to believe. Whilst eminent historians who have impartially investigated the matter, unhesitatingly ascribe the work to Melanchthon as its author, there are nevertheless others who ascribe the work entirely or chiefly to Luther; or speak of the Confession as if it had been prepared by Melanchthon with the constant advice and assistance of Luther, so that it nevertheless really gives Luther's views, and must be interpreted by his writings; or, if Luther took no part in the preparation of the Confession, he at least gave it his hearty approval before it was presented to the diet, and therefore it is a correct exhibition of his views.* Easy as it might be to adopt and circulate such views, and to follow the authori-

* One need but look at the literature on the subject, to see how general these opinions are. The *Lutherstiftung* in Leipzig in 1854, published the Confession with this title page: "Dr. Luther's Augsburgische Confession." *Dr. Guericke* in his "Symbolik" says, that "the Confession was prepared by Melanchthon, with the constant advice of Luther." *Cyprian* in his history of the Confession says, that next to God it proceeds from Luther. He also thinks that the Confession was finished before Augsburg was reached. His proof is very strange. Page 105 he says: "Wise men write their preface last; and as Melanchthon had already finished the preface at Coburg, therefore the Confession must also have been finished." But on pages 68 and 69 he gives original documents which flatly contradict his statement. The fact is, that the preface referred to was for the Torgau articles, not for the Augsburg Confession. *E. F. Leopold* in Herzog's Encyclopedia, art. "Augsb., Conf." states, that Luther approved the Confession before it was presented to the diet. In this country similar views prevail. In the Catechism published by authority of the Pennsylvania Synod, p. 80, Melanchthon is represented as merely arranging the materials given him and thus forming the Confession which "was carefully examined by Luther and those who adopted his doctrines, and was declared by them to be a faithful exhibition of the Scriptures." That Luther at least approved the Confession before it was presented to the diet, seems to be the almost universal opinion in this country, as may be seen from Schmucker's Lutheran Manual p. 25, Dr. C. P. Krauth Jr., Evangelical Review, Jan. 1867, p. 63, and editorials and articles by correspondents in "Lutheran Observer" and "Lutheran and Missionary." These views therefore, belong to no party, but are held by men of all parties.

A host of great authorities in direct conflict with these erroneous views might be quoted; but it is better to let the original documents decide the question.

ties favoring them, we are in duty bound to reject them, as not only devoid of all historical basis, but as in direct conflict with the most positive historic facts. Luther's letters and those of Melanchthon and the other Protestants at Augsburg, prove conclusively, *that Luther cannot be regarded as the author of the Confession; that he gave no advice whatever on any article in the Confession; that he did not give his approval of the Confession before its presentation to the diet; and that he did not even see the Confession before that time.**

Luther helped to prepare the Schwabach and Torgau articles. They were not exclusively his works, though no doubt he exerted a greater influence in their preparation than any one else. He distinctly stated, (as shown above,) in their preface, that he did not prepare the former, but only helped to prepare them. The latter were prepared by him together with Melanchthon, Jonas, and Bugenhagen. These works, indeed, lie at the basis of the Confession, but they are not that Confession itself. Whilst Luther helped to prepare the works most intimately related to the Augsburg Confession, *in the preparation of that Confession itself he took no part*, and consequently he cannot with truth be regarded as its author.

Luther, with the other Protestants, expected that the Torgau articles would be presented to the diet, for which reason Melanchthon wrote a preface to them at Coburg. The 4th of May, Melanchthon wrote to Luther from Augsburg, that he had made the preface more rhetorical, but not a word is said about changing the articles themselves, or about preparing others for the diet. Nor did Luther know that the original intention of presenting the Torgau articles as prepared by the Wittenberg theologians, was changed, until he received the elector's letter dated May 11th. In this letter† the elector says: "After you and our other theologians at Wittenberg had prepared, at our

* Luther's relation to the Augsburg Confession is thoroughly investigated by L. J. Rueckert, professor at Jena, in a pamphlet entitled: "Luther's Verhaeltniss zum Augsburger Bekenntniss." He draws his conclusions from letters written during the diet. And though his conclusions may not all be adopted, the pamphlet will be found very valuable in the investigation of this subject.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 687.

request, the articles on the religious subjects which are matters of dispute, we will not now hide from you that master Philip has here reviewed the same, and has brought them into the form which we herewith send you. And it is our gracious desire that you review and weigh the same without restraint. And wherever it pleases you, or you see fit to take away or to add anything, that you will please note next to it (on the margin,)* so that we may be prepared for the arrival of his imperial majesty, which we soon expect; and you will send the same well secured and sealed, back again immediately by this messenger."

At the same time Melanchthon wrote to Luther as follows: † "Our Apology is sent to you, although it is rather a Confession. For the emperor has no time to listen to long discussions. I have, however, said those things which I thought specially profitable or suitable. With this object in view I have embraced nearly all the articles of faith, for Eck has spread the most fiendish calumnies against us. I desired to prepare an antidote to these. You will judge of the whole writing according to your spirit."

These letters are very important. They show that the original intention of presenting the Torgau articles was abandoned, and that they had already been changed. Melanchthon's letter shows that the document sent to Luther, the new draft of the Augsburg Confession, could hardly be called an "Apology," but was rather a "Confession." And it was made a confession rather than an apology, because the emperor would not have time to listen to long defences of the truth. But the letter also gives us the reason why the original intention of presenting articles only on the controverted subjects, such as the elector requested in his letter of March 14th, and such as the Torgau articles were, was changed, and instead a confession was prepared, giving articles on which Protestants and Catholics agreed, as well as those on which they differed. Dr. Eck, the bitter enemy of Luther and violent opponent of the Reformation, had spread "fiendish calumnies" respecting the Protestants. We know that he was aided in this work by the Spaniards and others who charged them with

* See Appendix B.

† Corp. Rep. II. No. 685.

the grossest infidelity, and even with atheism. To refute these calumnies Melanchthon determined to give a statement of the faith of the Protestants, as the best refutation of the slanders against them. These calumnies were, therefore, the occasion of the completeness of the Confession; this is evident from Melanchthon's words: "I have however, said those things which I thought most profitable and suitable. With this object in view *I have embraced nearly all the articles of faith, for Eck has spread the most fiendish calumnies against us. I desired to prepare an antidote to these.*"

Luther saw the draft of the Confession sent him May 11th. But very little time was given him to examine the document carefully. It must be sent back immediately with the same messenger who brought it. Whatever suggestions or alterations he might desire to make, were to be in the shape of marginal notes. Luther sent the draft back immediately, making neither alteration nor suggestion, not even on the margin. His letter to the elector on this occasion was very brief. It is dated May 15th, and reads as follows: "I have read Master Philip's Apology, which pleases me very well; and I do not know how to improve or alter it;* nor would this be proper, as I cannot step so gently, nor so quietly. May Christ, our Lord, grant his assistance, that it may produce much and great fruit, which we hope and pray, amen."

Short as this letter is, it contains all the advice and assistance given by Luther in the preparation of the Confession as far as can be learned from the documents which have been handed down to us. There is not the slightest evidence that he gave any other advice or made any other suggestions whatever.

But there are those who from this reply of Luther argue that he gave his hearty approval of the Confession before it was presented to the diet.† But as there is no other

* Some say that Luther at this time added to Art. 10 the words: "Et improbant secus docentes." However consistent with Luther's spirit these words may be, his own letter is the best evidence that he did not add them.

† Melanchthon himself says (Danz, Die Augsburg Confession, p. 9, Melanchthon, Concilia, II. 392): "Nihil mihi sumsi. Præ-

approval of Luther until after the Confession had been presented to the diet, these persons claim that, when Luther May 15th, approved the Confession, it was already finished, which is however proved to be an error by the letters of Melanchthon written after that time. Luther could not infer anything else from the elector's letter to him than that the Confession was to be presented in that form; and the close of Luther's reply shows that he expected it to be presented thus.

The six weeks from the time that Luther saw the draft of May 11th, until the Confession was finished, were spent by Melanchthon in constantly altering and improving the work. Some, indeed, try still to make Luther's approval that of the finished Confession, by claiming that May 11th the work was *materially* done, and after that Melanchthon only improved the style, without changing the matter,* an assertion which is not only unfounded, but in direct conflict with the facts. For after this date Melanchthon repeatedly

sentibus Principibus et aliis gubernatoribus et concionatoribus disputatum est ordine de singulis sententiis. Missa est deinde et Luthero tota forma Confessionis, qui Principibus scripsit, se hanc Confessionem et legisse et probasse." From this it is evident that Luther saw the complete form of the Confession and approved it. The complete form referred to is that sent him May 11th, and the approval is that of Luther May 15th. For no other complete form was sent to Luther before its presentation to the diet. And according to Melanchthon's letter to Luther May 22d, it was not at all intended to send a complete form to Luther again for his approval. And there is no other approval of Luther before the Confession was presented; but there is the most conclusive proof that he did not even see the finished Confession until after it was read to the diet; and the proof that he did not approve it before that is just as conclusive.

Danz also makes the approval to which Melanchthon refers in the extract, that contained in Luther's letter of May 15th.

* A writer in *Ev. Review*, Jan. 1867, page 63, says: "The material labor on the Augsburg Confession was finished and approved by Luther more than a month before the diet met. In the intervening weeks, he (Melanchthon) elaborated the style, and gave higher finish to the form of the Confession." Such statements are easily made but they have no historical basis whatever. How is it known that Melanchthon only elaborated the style after this? This is mere guesswork, which is in direct conflict with Melanchthon's letters, which show that his alterations were material as well as stylistic.

states in his letters, that he altered the Confession much every day. To Camerarius he writes June 26th, "I altered and improved many things in it daily, and would have altered still more, if the counsellors had permitted it." May 22d, he wrote to Luther: "In the Apology (Confession) we alter much every day. The article on Vows, which was rather meagre, I have taken out, and in its place I have put one that is more complete. At present I am writing the article on the power of the keys. I desire you to look through the articles of faith; if you find no fault with them, we will draw up the rest in some way. For some things in them must continually be changed so that they may be accommodated to the occasions."* Now, it is evident that Melanchthon would not have desired to know Luther's opinion of the doctrinal articles as they were May 22d, if they had not been altered since May 11th, for he already had Luther's view of the draft of that date. He took out whole articles, and put in new ones; the articles on abuses had continually to be accommodated to the occasions that presented themselves, and it was not at all intended to send them to Luther. Surely, this does not look like merely improving the style after May 11th.

These views are confirmed by the reports of the delegates from Nuremberg. May 28th they state that the theologians and counsellors are daily considering the Confession, altering and improving it.† May 31st they report that the

* Rueckert, p. 18, 19, thinks that this letter was never received by Luther. Whether he did or not receive it, it is certain that we have no reply of his to this letter. But the articles sent on this occasion did not constitute the entire Confession. Rueckert, summing up the testimony of the letters that passed between Augsburg and Coburg, says: "From this brief review of the letters it is proved beyond doubt, that there were no consultations with Luther, (respecting the Confession,) that there were no questions asked of him, nor answers received from him; second, that Melanchthon's account of May 22d, was not received by him, and third, that he saw nothing of the Confession before its presentation, except the draft of May 11th." But whether Luther received this letter and the articles does not affect the argument in the least, since the letter itself shows that since May 11th, the draft of the Confession had been materially altered, and not merely its style, which is the point now under consideration.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 705.

Latin Confession was not yet finished and that the German is being improved daily.* June 3d they send to Nuremberg a copy of the Latin, but several articles were still wanting which should also be sent as soon as finished.† Not before the 15th of June could they send a German copy, and even then it had neither preface nor epilogue.‡

Thus the proof is direct and conclusive that Luther's approval of the draft of May 11th, though the "complete form" was then sent him, was not the approval of the Confession materially finished. This daily counselling of theologians and counsellors with each other, and the daily altering and improving for six weeks, did not merely affect the style but also the matter of the Confession. Luther then did not even see the finished Confession before it was read, and consequently could not give it his approval. But the very day after the Confession was presented Melanchthon sent a copy to Luther with these words: "Our Confession has been presented to the emperor, which I herewith send you. In my judgment it is severe enough." On the next day Melanchthon wrote to Veit Diedrich, who was with Luther, and requested him to give Luther's opinion of the Confession.§ Surely this is a strange request of Melanchthon if he already had the opinion of Luther before the Confession was read.||

*Corp. Ref. II. No. 708.

†Corp. Ref. II. No. 712.

‡Corp. Ref. II. No. 723.

§Corp. Ref. No. 746. Cyprian, p. 69. June 30th Melanchthon again wrote to Veit Diedrich, saying: "I desire to know what the Doctor (Luther) thinks of the Apology?" Corp. Ref. No. 754.

|| Those who try to make Luther the author of the Confession, find themselves involved in inextricable difficulties. Their bravery in defending a lost cause is, however, heroic. Luther must, nolens volens, be made the author. When he speaks favorably of the Confession or adopts it as his, then these facts are made evidences that the authorship belongs to him. They do not trouble themselves about the unanimous testimony of the letters from Augsburg, which prove incontrovertibly that Melanchthon was the author. Luther calls the Confession "Master Philip's Apology," and speaks of it as the Confession "which Melanchthon prepared;" but that does not intimidate these men. But why are these men so anxious to prove that Luther approved of the Confession? It seems that the very

Unwelcome as these facts may be, we cannot ignore or deny them, unless we torture and mutilate, to suit our prejudices, documents whose testimony is incontrovertible. Luther is not only not the author of the Confession, but he did not even take an active part in its preparation; he did not even see the Augsburg Confession until after it had been presented to the diet.*

The more we investigate the whole matter, the more strange the facts connected with it appear. Melanchthon was anxious to have Luther's advice and assistance. He even wanted to go to Luther, if the elector would allow it;† but he was not permitted to go. Melanchthon, therefore, did not want to exclude Luther from taking part in the work.

Luther wrote many letters from Coburg to Augsburg during the preparation of the Confession; but with the exception of the few words to the elector May 15th, *he never even mentioned the Confession*, just as if it was a matter which neither concerned nor interested him. Even in reply to Melanchthon's letter of May 11th, which came with the draft of the Confession, he does not mention that document. To this must be added the fact, that during the latter part of the preparation of the Confession Melanchthon wrote a number of letters to Luther which did not reach him. But why did they fail to reach Coburg? The letters were gen-

fact that he was the author, which they pre-suppose, would have made his approval unnecessary. Some were anxious to know Luther's opinion of the Confession, which proves that they did not regard him as the author. But no one asked Melanchthon for his opinion of the Confession, for the simple reason that the author's approval of the Confession was self-evident. And because he was the author therefore he prepared the Apology of the Confession, and was afterwards allowed to publish and alter the Confession just as he pleased.

* Every one must consequently acknowledge the absurdity of the claim that the Confession must be explained according to the works of Luther. The formula of Concord (*De Cœna Domini*) actually claims that it must thus be interpreted, for fear it should not be Lutheran enough otherwise. Why not interpret all that Melanchthon ever wrote by Luther's works?

† Melanchthon to Luther May 4th. His letters of May 11th, and 22nd, also show that he was anxious to get Luther's advice.

erally sent from Augsburg to Coburg by the elector's messengers. The messengers came but brought Luther no letters.* Melanchthon was not to blame, for he wrote frequently to Luther. Nor did he know what became of the letters, as he states in a letter to Veit June 23rd.† The messenger was not to blame, as Luther himself states in a letter to Melanchthon June 27th.‡

Another fact must be noticed. The fact that Luther was thus kept in ignorance of what was being done at Augsburg, incensed him in the highest degree.§ So angry was he that he did not want to hear from Augsburg any excuses for the silence of his friends, and was even unwilling to read their letters; and Melanchthon requested Veit to read to Luther, even against his will, a letter which he sent him.|| It seems as if he felt most keenly that he did not deserve the treatment received, and that it was unjust to exclude him from all participation in, and even knowledge of, the great work done at Augsburg.

At the court of the elector Luther had for some reason fallen into disfavor with the prince electoral.¶ Melanch-

* In June Luther frequently complains of the long silence of his Augsburg friends. To Jonas he writes June 20th that for three weeks no letters from Augsburg had reached him. June 30th he wrote to Spalatin that four messengers had come to Coburg who had brought him no letters. Luther's complaints of the long silence of his friends may be seen in De Wette's "Letters of Luther:" 1221, 1225, 1229, 1230, 1239.

† "Nescio, qui fiat, ut non sint perlatæ."

‡ "Non est culpa nuntii."

§ See especially Melanchthon's letters to Luther June 26th and 27th. He says: "I cannot tell you, how much we have been grieved by Veit's letter, which informed us that you are very angry because we have not written often enough." "No worse evil could happen to us than that you should forsake us in this time of danger." Surely, if there had at this time been a hearty co-operation between Luther and the Protestants at Augsburg, in the great work of preparing the Confession, Melanchthon could not have feared that Luther might forsake them just when the crisis came.

|| Corp. Ref. No 746.

¶ To Luther Mel. wrote May 22nd: "Do not write again to the prince electoral, for he is more unkindly disposed towards you than to any one else."

thon was afraid to complain to Bruck about Luther's displeasure.* "And might not now the place be discovered where Melanchthon's letters were kept? The electoral messengers were to have delivered them, but they never received them. Melanchthon does not know what became of them; he does not venture to mention to Bruck his grief about Luther's wrath. May nothing be inferred from this? And what excuses may those have been, which Luther did not want to receive from the prince electoral,† on which account he tore the letter which he had written to him" (to the prince electoral).‡ The only inference we can draw is, that the letters of Melanchthon were kept or destroyed at Augsburg to prevent them from reaching Luther. Unwillingly as we draw this conclusion, we cannot do otherwise. And if this inference seems to throw blame on some Protestants at Augsburg, the reason lies in the facts themselves and the documents written at the time. If any other theory can account for these facts, it surely has never yet been presented. And Lutherans in Germany, whose scholarship is not questioned, do not deny the conclusions legitimately drawn from the facts given, which do not however in the least affect the real value of the Confession itself. Dr. Landerer, a Lutheran theological professor in the university of Tuebingen and also university preacher, in his article on Melanchthon in Herzog's Real-Encyclop., says: "Luther himself did not, indeed, take the direct part in preparing the Augsburg Confession which was formerly supposed; he was left in Coburg, not only because he was under the ban, but because the secular counsellors of the elector feared, and wanted to prevent, his decision and impetuosity at the proceedings at Augsburg as peace proceedings . . . Questions and answers about the details were not exchanged between Luther and Melanchthon; yes, it is very probable that several letters of Melanchthon to Luther did not at all reach their address, but were kept back by the counsellors of the elector."

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 745.

† De Wette No 1236. "Principi juniori, ut petis, scripseram, sed lasceravi rursus literas, metuens, ne moverem isti ingenio cogitationes, et tum excusationes audirem, quas nollem."

‡ Rueckert, p. 80.

But by whatever theory these facts may be accounted for, it is certain that Luther was excluded intentionally (not however by Melanchthon,) from participating in the work of preparing the Augsburg Confession after May 11th. The theologians at Augsburg gave their counsel on the subject; the secular counselors of the princes, men of shrewdness and sagacity, helped to prepare it and would not allow Melanchthon to make it what he wanted it to be;* but Luther was to take no part in the great work. Had his coöperation been desired, it might very easily have been obtained. The elector's messengers, were constantly passing between Augsburg and Coburg, so that Luther might have been consulted. And had his coöperation been asked for, he who thus far took the most active part in all the works of the Reformation, would surely have written more about the Confession during the seven weeks of its preparation, than the few words of May 15th, which contain neither suggestion nor advice. And the fact that his coöperation was not desired, explains the detention of Melanchthon's letters and Luther's consequent wrath.†

It cannot be difficult to discover the reasons for committing the work of preparing the Confession rather to

* Melanchthon to Camerarius, June 26th, Corp. Ref. II. No. 740, says, that he altered the Confession much daily, and would have altered it still more *if the counselors had allowed it.*

† The following views are given by Rueckert, p. 31, as the result of his investigation of the original documents: "The result of this investigation is as follows: The Augsburg Confession is so different from the confession which Luther prepared or helped to prepare [Schwabach articles], that it cannot with truth be called his; Luther saw only a part of this Confession, and this part not in the form in which the Confession was presented and has been transmitted to posterity; before its completion he was asked no advice on the subject, indeed, before it was finished he received no direct information as to what was transpiring there; Luther was highly incensed on account of the treatment he received on this occasion; besides the theologians, the secular counselors of the elector and also others took part in the work. It cannot quite be demonstrated that in the attempt to exclude Luther from taking part in the work, the secular powers acted dishonestly, but Melanchthon cannot be blamed."

These conclusions will, I think, be arrived at, in the main, by all who thoroughly examine the historical documents, unless they allow prejudice to torture and mutilate them.

Melanchthon than to Luther. We do not believe that the aim was at all to depreciate the great reformer or to present any other than his doctrines.* But the object which the Protestants had in view, made it necessary to present these views in as mild a form as possible. Luther, as he himself stated, could not tread as "gently and quietly" as Melanchthon did in the draft sent to him. That Melanchthon, better than Luther, could draw up such a Confession as was thought most suitable, was universally acknowledged. Had the Papists supposed that Luther had prepared the Confession, it would have been all the more unwelcome on that account. Then, Luther's method of stating the truth was too harsh for that occasion; the work was therefore committed into the hands of the mild and peaceable Melanchthon.† No one doubts that Luther would have

*Melanchthon evidently wanted to present Luther's views and claimed to follow his authority in preparing the Confession. Melanchthon to Luther June 27th, Luther to Melanchthon June 30th.

† Weber, in his critical history of the Augsburg Confession, says: "Es war demnach wohl ueberlegt, nicht Luthern mit seiner Feuerkraft und Enthusiasmus, der, wenn es auf Wahrheit ankam, so wenig des Koenigs als dummen Pfaffens schonte, in einer so delikaten Sache, als die damalige Religionsangelegenheit war, vor dem Kaiser und Reich reden zu lassen." Vol. I. p. 28,

Möehler in his Symbolik, p. 18, says: "Luther wurde fuer ein Friedensgeschaeft allgemein als untauglich erachtet."

If it were necessary many pages might be filled with quotations from the very best modern authors who ascribe the authorship of the Confession to Melanchthon and with Planck think it unjust, and childish, and mere enmity towards Melanchthon to attempt to deprive him of the honor of having composed the Confession. Scheidler (Ueber die Augsb. Confession, p. 63, note) says: "It is incomprehensible how any one could conceive the idea of denying Melanchthon's authorship of the Confession and of refusing to him the rights of this authorship, and of regarding Luther as the principal author."

Planck III. 41, note, states, that whenever any part of the Confession was finished, the opinion of the other theologians was asked. He then shows the absurdity of depriving Melanchthon of the right of the authorship on this account: "Aber es wäre nicht nur ungerecht, sondern kindisch deswegen sagen zu wollen, dass die Confession nicht sein (Melanchthon's) Werk, sondern das gemeinschaftliche Werk dieser Theologen gewesen sey. Auch diese Kinderey erlauben sich freylich von jeher die Gegner des Mannes; sie wird aber

placed the differences between the two parties in bolder relief than Melanchthon did. He plainly stated that the draft of May 11th, was milder than he could have made it; and in his letter of June 29th, to Melanchthon, he states that in his opinion the Confession made too many concessions to the Papists; so that it is certain that he would not have made so many.*

Melanchthon, cut off from the advice and assistance of Luther contrary to his own desire, keenly felt the great weight of responsibility resting on him. Full of anxiety and apprehension lest the work might fail to accomplish its end, he exercised the greatest care in preparing the Confession. "Perhaps no work, so small, ever cost its author

noch grundloser, wenn man dazu nimmt dass wahrscheinlich die meisten der anwesenden Theologen die Hauptarbeit recht geflissentlich Melanchthon allein überliessen. Wenigstens Schreibt es Melanchthon noch im J. 1547 an Camerar. *Neme tunc nos adjuvabat. El erat tamen magna confusio disputationum.*"

* For the benefit of those who may wish to examine for themselves the reliability of the statements made on the authorship of the Confession, I will give the most important literature on the subject. Besides other histories of the Confession, see especially the very complete history of Salig, and the critical history of Weber. Also the pamphlet of Rueckert referred to already, valuable for its thorough investigation of the original documents and numerous extracts from the same. But I invite special attention to the original documents themselves, being fully assured that they will corroborate the statements above. They will be found in the letters of Luther by De Wette, and in *Corpus Reformatorum*, vol. II. See especially Melanchthon to Luther, May 4th. He wants to visit Luther if the elector will allow it. Luther feels that his assistance is not desired in Augsburg. His letter to Link, May 8th.

Letters of the elector and Melanchthon to Luther, May 11th.

Luther's reply to the elector, May 15th.

Melanchthon alters the Confession much every day (so that it was not finished when Luther saw the draft of May 11th), his letter to Luther, May 22d; to Camerarius, June 26th.

Luther fails to receive letters from Augsburg, though Melanchthon had repeatedly written to him. Luther to Melanchthon, June 7th; to Casper von Teutleben, June 19th; to Justus Jonas, June 20th; Melanchthon to Luther, June 25th, 26th and 27th; to Veit Diedrich, June 25th. Luther's wrath on account of the treatment received. Letters of Luther and Veit Diedrich, in June, and Melanchthon's letters to the same.

so much care as this, in which Melanchthon most carefully weighed every word and sentence.*

The Latin copy of the Confession was prepared before the German, but at the close of May it was still without Preface and Epilogue,† and also without the article on faith and works.‡ The Preface was written by Bruck in German, a Latin translation of which was made by Jonas for the Latin copy of the Confession.§

On the 22d of June the emperor requested the Protestants to have their Confession ready for presentation on Friday the 24th. They however requested a delay of one day in order that they might have time to finish it and write out a legible copy for presentation. This request was refused. Melanchthon was accordingly obliged to labor almost incessantly at it, both day and night. So long did he work at improving and correcting the Latin Confession that no time was left to copy it, and hence it had to be presented with his erasures and additions, which made its reading difficult.

On the 23d the elector of Saxony assembled the Lutheran members of the diet, and had the Confession read to them. All were highly pleased with it. The theologians, thinking that perhaps the princes might not wish to endanger their lives, and the lives of their subjects, offered to present the Confession in their name.|| But this the princes would not allow. On this, as on so many occasions, the elector proved the depth and sincerity of his convictions of the truth of the doctrines he had embraced. "God forbid that you should exclude me," he said; "I too want to confess Christ." He ordered his counsellors to tell the theologians, "to do what is right for the glory of God, without regard to myself, my people, or my land."¶ On this day also the Confession was

* Matthes Symbolik, 66.

† Report of the delegates from Nuremburg, Corp. Ref. II. No. 708.

‡ Report of the delegates from Nuremburg, Corps. Ref. II. No. 712 and 723.

§ Fœstermann I. 460

|| Salig I. 196. Cyprian, 79.

¶ When prince Wolfgang signed the Confession he said: "I have tilted many times to please others, why then should I not now be ready, if necessary, to saddle my horse in honor and obedience of

signed. The signatures are as follows: John, Elector of Saxony; George, Margrave of Brandenburg; Ernst, Duke of Luneburg; Philip, Landgrave of Hesse; John Frederick, Duke of Saxony; Francis, Duke of Luneburg; Wolfgang, Prince of Anhalt; and the cities Nuremberg and Reutlingen.*

The emperor had merely ordered the presentation of the Confession, not its reading; but at this meeting it was decided by the Protestants to request that it be read before the diet. They not only wanted the Confession, which cost them so much time and labor, and which they valued so highly, to be heard by all the members, but they also wanted it to come before the diet in such a manner that it could not be treated as a private document.

Such was the genesis of the Augsburg Confession whose importance and results the Confessors themselves and its author could not possibly foresee. The form which the Confession finally assumed, was more owing to circumstances than to the original intention of the Protestants. Had the diet met when the elector reached Augsburg, then the Torgau articles would have been the Augsburg Confession; had it met a week later, then the draft sent to Luther would have been that Confession; and if the emperor had demanded the presentation of the Confession a month later than he did, there is not the slightest doubt that it would have been very different from what it was when presented. And whilst we may rejoice that time was given to bring the Confession into its present shape, it would be absurd and ridiculous to suppose that the re-

my Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, and abandoning my goods and life, rush into eternal life to possess the everlasting crown of glory." Seckendorf, 1053.

* There has been much dispute on the number of princes who signed the Confession. Some old manuscripts have the signatures of five, others of six, and others of seven princes. In the Book of Concord the Latin Confession has seven, the German only five. In another chapter it will be shown that the above are the true signatures.

After the Confession had been presented, but still during the diet, four more cities signed it: Kempten, Heilbron, Winnheim and Weissenburg.

quest of the emperor to have the Confession presented on the 24th of June, decided that the Confession as it then was fixed forever what the Confessors, the reformers and the Protestant Church must believe. Such mechanical views of the living doctrines of Evangelical Christianity, may be worthy of a corrupt and spurious Protestantism, which exchanges vital piety for mechanical forms; but the heroes of the Reformation and the Lutheran Church of that period never sunk to the level of such views. And the genesis of the Confession and its entire history prove that its author and the Confessors prepared and presented it in the fear of God as their views of the truth, and not as a document by means of which the living and growing doctrines of Protestantism were petrified into an unchanging system of divinity.





CHAPTER III.

THE AIM OF THE CONFESSORS IN PREPARING THE CONFESSION.

THE immediate occasion of the Confession was the proclamation of the emperor convening the diet at Augsburg. The emperor's aim, according to this proclamation, was, to have the different parties present their religious views, so that they might be compared with each other, with a view of harmonizing them and restoring peace to the distracted church. Of this aim the Protestants heartily approved. The elector of Saxony wrote to the emperor that he hoped his entrance into Germany, and his presence at the diet would, by the grace of God, promote peace, unity, and the general welfare.* The imperial proposition presented at the opening of the diet † confirmed the declaration of the proclamation, that the emperor desired the Protestants to present their opinions in German and Latin, in order that means might be devised to restore peace and unity to the church.

It was in compliance with this aim of the emperor as expressed in his proclamation, and reiterated in his proposition, that the Augsburg Confession was prepared. Thus we read at the close of the Confession: "The foregoing Articles we have, *in conformity with the edict*, desired to submit, as an evidence of our Confession and of our doc-

* March 23rd, Förstemann, Vol. I. 117.

† Förstemann, Vol. I. 308.

trine.”* This at once determines the great aim of the Protestants. The emperor’s declared wish being the restoration of peace and union between the Catholics and Protestants, the latter seconded his wish, and in accordance with it prepared their Confession. Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless a fact, that the very document which afterwards became the doctrinal basis of the Lutheran church, and the bone of contention between Papist and Protestant, was originally intended to prepare the way for harmony between these contending parties, and to make them one. The aim of the Protestants in preparing the Confession, was, peace with their enemies; and the Confession itself was intended as a peace-document. We do not deny that other aims were connected with this or were accessory to it, but this was the great aim of the Confession. †

A declaration so contrary to the views and wishes and prejudices of many, ought only to be made if it has the most decisive proof in its favor. And so abundant is the proof that we can make room for only part of it, and such is its nature that it can admit of no doubt to candid minds.

On this subject the preface and epilogue of the Confession are very important. In the preface part of the emperor’s proclamation is quoted, that at the diet the religious ques-

* That the Confession was intended to comply with the emperor’s proclamation, is also evident from the Preface to the Confession, and the letter of the elector of Saxony to the Wittenberg theologians March 14th.

† When it is said that the aim of the Confession was peace, this must not be understood to mean that it was intended to be a compromise with the errors of the papacy. The Protestants expected the diet to take the place of a general council, at which the religious questions were to be fairly discussed and decided. The emperor’s proclamation was calculated to encourage this hope. The Protestants did not expect to abandon their convictions for the sake of peace, though they were willing to make many concessions on what they regarded as non-fundamentals. They still hoped that their views might be accepted, or at least be tolerated, in which case peace would have been restored. The confession was presented as their condition of union. On its basis they wanted peace. Had it been accepted by the other party, then the desires of the Protestants would have been fulfilled. In the German empire at least the Catholic church would have been reformed; this was their aim, not separation from that church.

tion is to be considered diligently, the opinions and views of the different parties are to be heard and weighed graciously and affectionately, and for the purpose of restoring these views to one and the same Christian truth everything that has not been properly interpreted is to be removed, so that all may accept and hold the same true religion; and that since all are, and contend, under one Christ, so also all may live in one communion, church and union. With this desire of the emperor the Protestants declare in this same preface, they complied in coming to Augsburg and in preparing their Confession which they now present in German and Latin. They also declare their readiness to consult with their opponents with a view of restoring peace, so that they may all be one in Christ according to the emperor's proclamation. In the epilogue to the articles of faith, the Confessors say: "As these doctrines are clearly taught in the holy Scripture, and besides, are neither contrary nor in opposition to the universal Christian, or even to the Roman Church, as far as may be observed from the writings of the fathers, we think that our adversaries cannot disagree with us in the foregoing articles. Those therefore act altogether unkindly, hastily and contrary to all Christian unity and love, who resolve in themselves, without the authority of a divine command or of Scripture, to exclude, reject and avoid us all as heretics." They thus claim that on the doctrinal articles the Catholics ought to agree with them, and that they ought not to be rejected or excluded from the Church. They even claim to be in harmony with the Roman Church "as far as may be observed from the writings of the fathers." In the epilogue to the whole Confession we read: "Nor should it be imagined that anything has been said or intimated here against any one out of hatred or disrespect; but we have stated those subjects only which we have considered it necessary to refer to and to mention, in order that it might be the more clearly perceived, that by us nothing is received either in doctrine or ceremonies which is contrary to the sacred Scriptures or opposed to the universal Christian Church. For it is clear indeed, and evident, that with the greatest vigilance, by the help of God (without boasting), we have been careful that no new and ungodly doctrine insinuate itself, spread and prevail in our churches."

They say that they "gently" pass over some subjects, that nothing is said out of hatred or disrespect, that they neither hold nor practice anything opposed to the universal Christian Church—strong reasons for tolerating them peaceably in the Catholic Church. And to put the keystone in the arch, that there may be no doubt as to their aim in preparing the Confession, they close by saying that it was prepared "*in conformity with the Edict.*" If now the confessors here tell the truth, their aim cannot be mistaken; for if the Confession was not prepared with a view to peace with the Papists, then the preface tells a direct falsehood. And so does the epilogue, for in that case the proclamation of the emperor with which it professes to comply, would not have been complied with.

That this was really the aim is confirmed by the whole history of the diet as well as by the letters written at that time. A letter written by Melanchthon during the preparation of the Confession to his brother George,* throws some light on this subject. He says: "I am almost persuaded that I was born under an unfavorable constellation, for I must experience the very thing which distresses me most. Gladly shall I suffer poverty, hunger, contempt and other evils, but what quite disheartens me is contention and strife. I am to compose the Confession which is to be presented to the emperor and the States. In spirit I foresee abuse, war, ravages, battles. And what if now it were in my power to prevent so great an evil? Do thou, O God, in whom I trust, thyself aid me! Thou judgest us according to our intentions. I dare not, dear brother, abandon the matter as long as I live, but through no fault of mine shall the peace be disturbed. Other theologians wanted to compose the Confession, would to God their desire had been granted! Perhaps they could have done it better. Now they are dissatisfied with mine and want to have it changed. Here one cries, there another. I must, however, be allowed to keep my own way, namely: to avoid everything which might irritate still more. God is my witness that my intentions are good; my reward will however be

*Schmidt, Life of Melanchthon, 234. Niemyer, Melanchthon im Jahre der Augsb. Conf., 22. Part of this letter was quoted in the preceding chapter.

that I shall be hated.”* In his preface to the Apology, Melanchthon says: “I have until now striven as much as possible to speak and act in respect to the Christian doctrine in the customary manner, *in order that in the course of time we might the more easily come to an agreement.*”

Brentz, the friend of Melanchthon, wrote to a friend the day before the Confession was read, that in it (the Confession) the princes request that the controversy may be amicably settled and peace established.†

Here the testimony of the principal confessor, the elector of Saxony, must not be omitted. In a writing for the emperor, dated July 21st,‡ he appeals to the Confession as prepared in compliance with the emperor’s desire to restore peace and unity to the church; he refers to the language of the preface of the Confession as proof that he was willing to do his utmost for the attainment of this end, and still offers to do all in his power for the same purpose. He thus appeals to the Confession itself as an evidence that his aim and sincere desire was peace and unity. Language cannot be plainer nor proof more decisive.§

Four days after the Confession was presented, Justus Jonas, of all the theologians at Augsburg the most intimate friend of Melanchthon and his counselor in preparing the Confession, wrote as follows to Luther: “The chancellor and the rest of us, advised the princes to see the emperor himself, and give him a brief summary of our doctrines, and indicate on what points they could make concessions, and on which this could not be done.|| Philip is writing

* Many other extracts might be taken from Melanchthon’s letters which prove the same thing. One more, however, may suffice from a letter to Camerarius. “Ego nullius in hoc negotio gratiam aucupatus sum: pacis cupidum me et fuisse et esse non obscure profiteor.” D’Aubigne says respecting Melanchthon, vol. IV., 179: “Had he not often repeated that peace should be sought after above all things?”

† Corp Ref. II. 735. “In ea petunt principes, ut amice controversia componatur, et pax constituatur.”

‡ Förstemann, vol. II. 113.

§ In a letter to the emperor dated May 31st, (Förstemann I. 284,) the elector urges him diligently to use his exertions for the restoration of peace and unity.

|| The very day on which this letter was written Jonas, John Rurek, Erhard Schnepf, and Henry Beck, presented a memorial to

articles of agreement which will here be considered, and which are to be sent to you for review or for you to arrange. I pray you, my dearest father, for the sake of Jesus Christ, to weigh everything well, for the matter is one of the utmost importance. Thou art the chariot of Israel and the horseman thereof; God has greatly favored you above others. Philip engages in this matter cautiously and thoughtfully, and wishes that as much as possible may be done for the sake of the common peace. Not long ago we disputed about the jurisdiction of the bishops, which I should like to say to you privately. In this matter you should give your advice, lest all the future generations suffer in this respect and our consciences be burdened.* I also wish that all might be conceded through which Christ is not injured; but I doubt not that Christ, through thy mouth, will reveal what is to be done. Write as often as possible to Melanchthon who for the sake of the common welfare is often sad beyond measure."

This letter gives a good idea of the aim, the hopes, and the fears of the Protestants at that time. For the sake of peace they were ready to make all concessions not directly in conflict with the Scriptures. Some time after this the question was actually discussed whether private mass, on which the Papists laid so much stress, might not be allowed with some modifications, if thus peace could be secured.† On the 13th of September, Jonas wrote concerning the proceedings of the diet, "that for the sake of peace and

the princes requesting them to see the emperor, give him a brief account of the conditions on which harmony would be possible, and on what points no concessions could be made. Pressel. *Life of Jonas*, 67. Seck. 1057.

* Melanchthon was in favor of making great concessions in reference to the power and jurisdictions of the bishops, if thereby peace could be obtained. These concessions were, however, opposed by others who had been freed from this jurisdiction and were unwilling to submit to it again. This unwillingness to yield frightened Melanchthon. To Camerarius he wrote June 19th, (Corp. Ref. II. 732). "Would that we might obtain peace even if the condition was more severe."

† Förstemann, II. 885.

love they had in every way zealously used charity and mildness. Thus far we have made use of Paul's words, 'As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men;' this we have attempted to do in all possible ways. We have thus far affectionately acted mildly in hope of peace."*

Luther was far less hopeful than some of the other Protestants. He knew the Papists too well to base many hopes on their leniency. When he heard that the preachers had been silenced at Augsburg during the diet, he wrote to Agri-
cola, that he drew from this fact the conclusion that the emperor would attempt to suppress their doctrines. "For the hopes based on the charity of the emperor are vain." Whilst anxious for peace and willing to make concessions for that purpose, as he repeatedly intimated in his letters, he did not fail to express his disapprobation of some of the efforts to effect a union between the Papists and Protestants; and he thought it would be as easy to form an agreement between Christ and Belial, as between the Pope and Luther. Yet he used his influence for the cause of peace, and he wrote to the Papists to urge them to use their influence for the same purpose. In a letter to the elector of Mentz, dated July 6th, he declares that they have sought and offered peace. "Our doctrine does not injure you, it keeps the peace, it teaches peace, it permits you to remain what you are, teaches also to leave you everything and take nothing from you; this alone should be sufficient to move to peace." The same admonition to peace is found in his "Admonition" to the clergy assembled at the diet, written in June.† "For the sake of peace we will let you remain what you are and teach what you please, as we have heretofore done; will leave you your goods, and permit you to be princes and lords. Thus you may see that in us you have not enemies, but great friends and defenders." "Do keep the peace and do not persecute us."‡

* Fœrstemann, II. 423.

† Seck. 1098—1105.

‡ Many more extracts from Luther's letters, to the same effect might be given. But the above are sufficient. Though unwilling to make as many concessions as Melancthon, he nevertheless earnestly desired and sought peace.

So clear and decisive is the proof on this subject that German scholars so generally acknowledge that the Confession was prepared with a view to peace and union with the Catholics, that a writer in the *Studien und Kritiken* could say in 1850 (page 231), "It is universally acknowledged in our day that the Augsburg Confession was intended to give the outlines for union-negotiations (*Unionsverhandlung*) with the adherents of the Roman Catholic church, and every one who judges fairly will have to acknowledge that the Protestants certainly bear the smaller part of the blame of the entire failure of this aim at union." An eminent historian of Germany says, that the Confession was the utmost that could be offered for the sake of peace.*

Danz† gives the following as the reasons why the Confession was well adapted to be a basis for peace-negotiations. "1. On account of the prudent arrangement of the articles in general, especially the doctrinal ones. 2. On account of sparing in a friendly manner the party with which an agreement was to be made. 3. 4. By expressing a sincere desire that union and agreement might be formed, which wish is expressed in the Preface. 4. By showing in what the true unity of the church consisted, in Art. 7."

Rudelbach,‡ the strictly orthodox Lutheran, and the learned defender of the symbols of the church, regards the Confession as the "Introduction to gracious negotiations." "The hope to win the opponents was by no means to be abandoned." "A feeling of affection for those who had formerly been spiritual relatives, as well as forbearance towards erring consciences, had to determine and soften the tone of the Confession." The Confessors wanted to persuade the Papists not to reject the doctrines of the Reformation and the efforts to restore union, since they have so much in common. "This persuasive spirit, in fact, also runs through

* Hase, *Kirchengeschichte*, 8th edit. 39?—"als das aeusserste, was man zum Frieden bieten koenne." See also Niedner's *History* 1st edit. 606.

† Die Augsb. Confess. Dr. J. T. L. Danz, 65.

‡ Historisch-Kritische Einleitung in die Augsburgische Confession, Dr. A. G. Rudelbach. 47-50.

the Augsburg Confession, for which reason it cheerfully complies with the aim of the emperor's proclamation, as expressed in the Preface."*

In order that peace might be obtained, it was necessary to refute the many calumnies against the Protestants. All the power of ignorance, prejudice, and hatred, was used to pervert their doctrines and make them as odious as possible. Valdez, secretary of the emperor, in an interview with Melanchthon, said: "The Spaniards imagine that the Lutherans teach abominable doctrines respecting the Trinity, Christ, and the Mother of God, on which account they think it more meritorious to kill a Lutheran than a Turk." "I am aware of this," replied Melanchthon, "I have already spoken with several Spaniards on the subject, and can accomplish but little."†

Such calumnies Melanchthon aimed to refute in the Confession, as he states in his letter to Luther May 11th, and also in the Epilogue to the doctrinal articles, where he says (in the Latin): "It is a false calumny that all ceremonies, all the ancient institutions, are abolished in our churches." Many sects and errors are consequently condemned, to prove that the Protestants did not agree with them, which might otherwise have been passed over in silence. In thus refuting these calumnies, the aim of the Protestants was, to give the Papists a correct idea of their doctrines. For this reason the Confessors insisted so perseveringly on having their Confession read before the diet, and not merely presented in writing.

That the great aim of the Protestants might be accomplished, Melanchthon made the Confession as mild as his

* Appendix C.

† Years after this Luther related the following in his preface to the Schmalcald Articles: "Here in Wittenberg there was a doctor who had been sent from France, who publicly told us that his king was perfectly convinced that among us there was no church, no government, no marriage, but that all lived together as cattle and did what they pleased." Even in Germany many erroneous views respecting the doctrines and practices of the Protestants prevailed; but it was much worse in France, Italy and Spain,

convictions of the truth and duty would allow.* This mildness was calculated to assure their opponents that their aim to attain peace was sincere, and that for that purpose they were willing to make concessions. All unnecessary harshness is carefully avoided. The abuses are represented as mildly as possible, and some important ones are not even mentioned, such as the authority of the pope, Indulgences, the number of the Sacraments, and Purgatory, a fact which so surprised the Papists, that, after the Confession was presented, the emperor asked the confessors whether they had any more articles to present. So anxious was Melancthon to present their views in the least offensive form, that he feared after the Confession was completed, that it was not mild enough.† And the very day after the Confession was read he wrote to Luther that it was necessary to come to some conclusion as to how much could be conceded to their opponents on both the elements in the Eucharist, on the Marriage of the Priests, and on Private Mass, on which points he feared the Catholics would be but little inclined to yield. Luther feared that he would yield too much, and on one occasion warned him not to give up more than he had.

Throughout, the Confession bears the impress of Melancthon's mild, conciliatory spirit. He was just the man for the occasion as far as peace was the aim, for none of the reformers could better have performed the work than he did. But he was too timid. He lacked Luther's robust faith, and unshaken confidence in God and the righteousness of their cause. He was, consequently, often found in tears. The encouragement of the other theologians and of Luther's noble letters was not sufficient to dispel his fears and gloom. And it is a blessing to the Evangelical church that he was not allowed to make all the concessions he was willing to make for the sake of peace.

It need hardly be stated to any but those most ignorant

* Melancthon repeatedly states that his aim was to make the Confession as mild as possible. Some extracts from his letters proving this have already been given. The preface to the Apology proves the same. Numerous extracts to the same effect may be seen in Danz 10, 12.

† Letter to Camerarius, June 26th.

of the history of the origin of the Confession, that it was not at all intended to be the doctrinal basis of a new organization, or church; for the very fact that its acknowledged aim was peace and union with the Catholics, makes this impossible.* The Protestants still claimed to be in the church, and neither by word nor act had they separated themselves from it. Not to establish a new church, but to reform the existing church, was their object; their work was reformation, not rebellion. Hence, the Confession demands toleration in the church; complains of those who reject the confessors as heretics; claims to teach nothing contrary to the Christian church in general, nor even to the Roman church so far as its views may be learned from the writings of the fathers. The confessors claim to be no new organization, and do not aim to form one; consequently the Confession could not be intended as the basis of a new organization.†

The Confession was intended for the diet only, and not at all for future ages. The confessors had no idea that the document they were preparing would occupy the position which the Confession afterwards occupied, and still

*Yet, for some unaccountable reason, men of intelligence can be found, who actually believe that the Confession was prepared for the purpose of making it the basis of the Protestant church, or that it was intended to be an expression of the faith of the Protestants or Lutherans, to which they bound themselves and their followers for all time to come. The origin of views so directly in conflict with the declared intentions of the confessors and with the great fundamental principles of the Reformation, have their foundation in fancy, or prejudice, not in history.

†All know that Luther's aim was to reform the church by remaining in it. How far Luther was from regarding the Augsburg Confession as the basis of a new organization, or as unconditionally binding on Protestants, may be seen from his views on the union of Catholics and Protestants written in Feb. 1541. De Wette 2525. These views are expressed in a review of some propositions of Bucer for the union of the two parties. "Since they (the propositions) profess and acknowledge the fundamentals, such as the articles on Justification, on both the elements, on the abolition of Private Mass, and on Monachism, it may be called an agreement." Thus, if only on these points an agreement could be formed with the Papists, he would have been satisfied. An unconditional adherence to the Confession is not thought of.

occupies, in the Lutheran church. As it was intended for that time and occasion only, neither the Confession nor the confessors made any claim whatever to fix unalterably or unconditionally the doctrines of the church. So far is this from being the case that in the preface an appeal is made to a general council to decide the disputed points, if they were not settled at Augsburg. The Confession professes to be an exposition only of what was held and taught by the confessors, their preachers, and their teachers.* It is simply their Confession of Faith, and an Apology for the same, not a law or constitution to which they bound themselves or others. And he who supposes that the Lutherans of that period imagined that they had reached that point of perfection from which all departure was but retrogression, greatly misunderstands their work, as well as their spirit, and charges them with the absurdity of rejecting the very principles which they considered fundamental, and which they advocated against the attacks of the Papists. The very thing they contended for was, that the Bible, not an individual or a church, fixes the dogmas of religion. And whilst they were willing to make concessions for the sake of peace, they never so disgraced themselves as to make to the Papists the concessions that they (the confessors), or any other body of men, had a right to fix the doctrines of religion. Had they acknowledged this, their work would have been done; they would have acknowledged the very thing Rome was contending for. Only those who are themselves frozen up in an iceberg of rigid symbolism, and attempt to hide their Romish principles under a Protestant name, are capable of prejudicing themselves into the belief that at any period in the history of the Reformation, that time of life, liberty, action and progress, all that had thus far been in a living, fluid state, was suddenly congealed into a solid and changeless mass. As such views cast the greatest reproach on the church of the Reformation period, the reformers would have spurned those who hold them, and Luther could have said to them with more emphasis than to the Zwinglians—ye

* See the preface. The same fact is evident from the frequent repetition of the phrases, "It is taught," "We are falsely accused," and similar ones.

have a different spirit. And had such men existed at that time, it is very probable that an article condemning them would have been inserted in the Confession.

The Augsburg Confession gives us the development of Protestantism up to that time; but with the Confession itself evangelical religion received a new impulse in its career of progress. The reformers did not move in a circle whose centre was 1530; but, starting with great principles, they moved right on in their course, careful to retain sufficient liberty to slough off old errors and imperfections, and to adopt new truths as they became manifest. They did not pretend to reach the terminus of the course; for as the progress they commenced is eternal, the goal can never be said to have been reached, though we may be pressing toward it. The Augsburg Confession indicates the position attained in 1530, and it became a new point of departure; but it is not the goal itself, and no human document, however venerable or valuable, can be that goal in the Protestant church.*

* That the Confession was not intended to be the basis of a new organization, nor the law of the Protestant or Lutheran church, will become still more evident when the authority of the Confession during the Reformation is discussed.





CHAPTER IV.

THE READING OF THE CONFESSION.

No one has a right to question the doctrines of the church if its decisions are infallible. There can then be no dispute on those doctrines, for the right to dispute about them, implies that the church may err. The decisions of an infallible church prevent the necessity of all further investigation and discussion. The Papists at Augsburg were, therefore, perfectly consistent with their views of the church, when they did their utmost to avoid all disputes on its doctrines, since the right to dispute questioned the infallibility of the church. But there were other reasons. As Luther said, their cause could not bear the light as well as that of the Protestants. As the popes of that period were opposed to the convening of a general council, for fear their own acts might be too closely scrutinized, so many of the strict Papists generally opposed the free and thorough investigation and discussion of the doctrines and practices of the church, for fear its abuses might be exposed. Discussion, too, besides damaging the cause of the pope, might also serve to widen the breach between the two parties, and defeat the object of the diet; and thus, instead of uniting the parties, the hated doctrines which had already spread so rapidly, would only receive greater publicity.

Prudence and policy, therefore, dictated to the papal party the advantages of settling the religious questions as quietly as possible. The emperor accordingly tried to induce the elector of Saxony to come to him at Innsbruck, in order that the whole matter might privately be considered and, if possible, arranged between them. For the same reason the preaching of the gospel was prohibited at Augs-

burg ; and the most strenuous efforts were made to prevent the reading of the Confession before the diet, and to prevent discussion after it was read.

Immediately after the arrival of the emperor at Augsburg an effort was made to persuade the Protestants that it was best to settle the religious question in private. The papal legate Campeggio was very naturally most active in this affair. To carry out his designs Alphonso Valdez, a learned and liberal Spaniard, the principal secretary of the emperor, was chosen.* On the 17th of June he conferred with Melanchthon who of all the Protestants was the most ready to make concessions for the sake of peace. When Valdez asked : "What is the desire of the Lutherans, and how the question might be settled?" Melanchthon answered : "The Lutheran question is not so intricate and awkward as his majesty probably imagines. The controversy turns chiefly on these points : both the elements in the Eucharist, the marriage of priests and monks, and private Mass. If these articles could be agreed on, an understanding might be arrived at respecting the others." Valdez reported the result of the colloquy to the emperor who was well pleased with it and sent him to confer with Campeggio on the subject. The papal legate was inclined to yield on the first two points, but was opposed to the abolition of private Mass. The next day Valdez, at the emperor's command, again sent for Melanchthon, and informed him of the emperor's gratification over the result of the former meeting, and of the views of the legate. In closing the interview he said : "His majesty desires that he (Melanchthon) should draw up the articles desired by the Lutherans and give the same to Valdez, in order that the emperor might consider the same. They were to be moderate and as brief as possible, in order that his majesty might have the more reason to act with a view to peace. His majesty also thought best to consider the matter in secret and to avoid a public hearing and prolix discussion ; for such a public hearing and quarrelsome discussions only served to produce more bitterness and not union." Melanchthon promised to weigh the matter and present the desired articles, though he must first

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 732 and 734. Seck. 1041. Salig. I. 186.

confer with the other Protestants on the subject. Chancellor Bruck and the elector, however, defeated the plans of the papal legate and the emperor, and frustrated the mission of Valdez.* The secretary, however, saw the Confession before it was presented, and thought it too bitter for the Papists to accept.†

All the efforts of the papal party to settle the religious question in private having failed, it was decided to take it up at once, since all other matters before the diet would depend on the manner of its disposal. Having with great difficulty finished their Confession by the time designated by the emperor, the confessors thought that no obstacles would be interposed to prevent its reading on the 24th of June. On the afternoon of that day the pope's legate, cardinal Campeggio, addressed the diet, first directing attention to the dissensions in the church, and afterwards to the war with the Turks. In this as well as the other papal addresses before the presentation of the Confession, much was said which was well calculated to excite and prejudice the emperor, and the Papists generally, against the Reformation; but a general church council, so much needed and earnestly desired by the reformers and the more pious of the Catholics; the reformation of abuses, and a fair discussion of disputed points; these subjects were either entirely avoided, or else were disposed of very hastily. It was but too evident that in religious matters Rome was determined to have its own way; but in the war against the Turks the coöperation of the Protestants was found necessary, a fact which was of great advantage to them, as otherwise means would probably have been used to force them to accept doctrines and practices to which, under the circumstances, it was not safe to resort. The emperor was well aware that if he drove the Protestants to arms, a war waged at the same time against them and the Turks, would involve him in the greatest difficulties, and might prove his ruin. But the bigotry and hatred of the most bitter enemies of the Reformation so blinded them, that they advocated the most extreme measures to exterminate the evangelical party, and

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 734, Förstemann I. 461.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 740.

had the emperor followed their counsel war would have been inevitable. They were, however, prudent enough first of all to make an effort to win them back peaceably to Rome. That this would be accomplished was the hope expressed by Campeggio in his address. He thought peace would be restored if all would but comply with the emperor's command—well knowing that the emperor would command what Rome desired.

In the name of the emperor, the elector of Mentz replied to the cardinal's address, pronouncing it excellent and Christian, and stating that his majesty and the States would do what was right in the sight of God, the pope, and all men. The elector of Saxony and his allies thought the time had now come to present their Confession, and desired to have it read. But the emperor first wanted to hear the report of the Austrian ambassadors, which referred to the Turkish war. After this report the Protestants arose, and through chancellor Bruck informed the emperor that, in accordance with his request, they had prepared a Confession of their faith, both in Latin and German, which they hoped he would now hear. They also expressed the hope that the other party, in compliance with the emperor's proclamation that all parties should be heard, would also present their Confession.* The emperor, however, after consulting his brother and other princes, informed them that as it was already quite late, they might present their Confession in writing. This was just what the papal party desired, in order that they might prevent its reading before the diet.† Although it had been decided to take up the religious question first, and though that day had been specially appointed for the reception of the Confession, it seemed that so much time had been given to Campeggio and the ambassadors for the very purpose of preventing its reading. Had the emperor's request been successful, the Confession would have lost much of its influence at the diet and much of its historical significance. Instead of being heard by all, it

* Seck., 1049.

† The elector writing to Luther, June 25th, states, that the emperor's brother and the other Catholic princes did their utmost to prevent the reading of the Confession.

might not have come before the diet at all officially; might have been treated as a private affair rather than a public Confession of faith. The confessors wanted it read, so that all might know their real doctrines and see what wicked calumnies against them their enemies had spread. They, therefore, repeated their request to have it read before the diet, claiming that the importance of the matter, their honor, and the refutation of the slanders of their enemies made this necessary. Their request, so reasonable, just and necessary, was again refused by the emperor. He was persevering and determined, but they were still more so. For the third time they earnestly besought him to permit the reading of the Confession. Their perseverance triumphed. As it was already late he gave them the privilege of reading their Confession the next day. At the same time he requested a copy of the Confession. They, however, perhaps fearing that if he knew its contents he might fail to fulfil his promise, excused themselves by stating that, as the Confession had been prepared hurriedly, they desired to retain it for the purpose of reviewing and correcting it. This request was also granted.

Foiled in his attempts to prevent the reading of the Confession, the emperor was determined to let as few as possible hear it. It was indeed to be read before the diet, but not publicly, for none but members of the diet were to be present. Instead of appointing the meeting the next day in the hall in which the diet usually met, it was appointed in the chapel of the imperial palace. The request of the Protestants to have it read publicly in the usual place of meeting, was denied.*

Saturday, the 25th of June, 1530, was destined to be a memorable day in the history of the Reformation, the day on which, for the first time, a Confession of the evangelical

* A full account of the efforts to have the Confession read is given by the delegates from Nuremberg, Corp. Ref. II., No. 738. On the 25th of June, the elector wrote to Luther: "After much humble supplication we have not been able to get a public reading of the Confession; for the king and the opposite party zealously opposed this. But so much has been granted that to-day the emperor will hear the articles in his palace. The matter was thus arranged in order that there might not be many persons present."

faith was to be read before an imperial diet. It was an act of recognition such as had never before been given the reformers and their work. This day forms an epoch in ecclesiastical history, with which a new period of progress begins, and to which the whole Protestant Church, and especially the Mother Church of the Reformation must ever look back with joy. In the afternoon the diet met at the emperor's palace, according to the appointment of the preceding day. The chapel was spacious enough to hold two hundred persons and was crowded; but all those who were not either members of the diet or necessary to transact its business, were obliged to withdraw. They went into the court below* where quite a crowd had assembled. When the reading was about to commence the confessors wanted to stand up, but at the emperor's request they retained their seats. The two Saxon chancellors, Bruck and Beyer, stepped into the middle of the room, the former holding in his hand the Latin, the latter the German copy of the Confession. The emperor wanted the Latin read; but the elector of Saxony replied, that as they were on German soil, he hoped the German language would be tolerated. This request being acceded to by the emperor, Bruck made a short address, after which Dr. Christian Beyer read the German copy of the Confession. So loud and distinct was the reading that not only those in the chapel, but also those in the yard could hear it, thus defeating the emperor's plan to have it read in the hearing of the diet only. After the reading, which lasted nearly two hours,† from four to six o'clock, Dr. Bruck wanted to present both copies to the imperial secretary, Alexander Schweiss; but the emperor himself stretched out his hand and took them. The German he gave to the elector of Mentz who sat at his side, but retained for himself the Latin copy.

Through palsgrave Frederick, the emperor informed the confessors that as the matter was one of great importance,

* The chapel was on the second floor.

† Jonas wrote to Luther: "Recitabat Confessionem nostram Cancellarius D. Christianus articulatim, distincte et clare, ut ab omni-bus exaudiretur: absolvit totum duabus horis, satis attentus erat Cæsar."

he would carefully consider the Confession as a Christian and gracious emperor, and let them know his decision. They thanked the emperor and the other members of the diet for kindly listening to their Confession, and besought the emperor to consider diligently and kindly this matter which concerned the welfare of their souls. Privately the emperor requested them not to publish the Confession, with which request they promised to comply.*

The effects of the reading of the Confession on the Catholics were various. "To some of them it was tedious; others were pleased with it; some were more embittered by it; but none were converted."† Its contents, so scriptural, and its tone, so mild, surprised many who had expected the most violent attacks on the Church, and very heretical doctrines. It was nothing unusual, especially outside of Germany, to ascribe to the Protestants all the excesses of the Anabaptists and ranting fanatics, and to class them with Turks and atheists. Those who entertained such views were astonished that the Confession taught the essential doctrines of Christianity, and proved its articles by appealing to the Scriptures, the fathers and the Catholic Church. The principal heresies condemned by Rome, were also condemned by the Confession. Spalatin, in a letter in which he states the emperor, the king and many of the princes regarded them as Mamelukes who cared for neither God nor the faith, says: "Many of them had not heard so much in all their lives concerning this doctrine" as they did during the reading of the Confession. The spirit of moderation, as far as the Catholic Church was concerned, of conciliation and deep piety which breathed through the Confession, was such as to gain the admiration of many of the more moderate among the Papists. William, duke of Bavaria, declared that from the Confession he had now learned to view the doctrines of Luther in a very different light from that in which they had generally been represented to him. Luther, in his Table-talk, states that the emperor afterwards said, that he wished that such doctrines were taught and preached in the whole world. The bishop of Augsburg declared that it differed from the Romish Church only in

* Corp. Ref. II., No. 748.

† Danz, p. 18.

reference to the abuses. "What has been read," he said, "is the truth, we cannot deny it." Peter Egedius, the emperor's confessor, a pious man, said to Melancthon: "You have a theology which can only be comprehended by him who prays much." The duke of Bavaria said to Eck: "You have consoled us with the idea that the Lutherans were easily answered; how is it now?" Eck replied: "I would venture to do so with the fathers, but not with the Bible." The duke answered "Then I must infer that the Lutherans are seated on the Bible, and the Papists beside it."* Some who acknowledged that abuses had crept into the Church, which ought to be abolished, were more convinced of this fact by the Confession. Matthew Lang, archbishop of Salzburg, acknowledged that most of the complaints against the abuses were well grounded, and the desire of the Protestants to have them removed seemed to be quite right; but said that it was too vexatious that they should all let themselves be reformed by a miserable monk.†

As the passage in the twenty-third article was read, which states that when some four hundred years ago the pope forbade the marriage of priests in Germany the archbishop of Mentz, who tried to enforce the law, was almost killed in a tumult made by the priests, king Ferdinand asked the elector of Mentz, who sat on his left, whether this was true? The fact was too well established for the elector to deny it, hence he gave an affirmative answer.‡

But from the same flower the bee extracts honey, the spider poison. The more perfect the Confession, the more it was calculated to exasperate the most bitter enemies of the Reformation. The very fact that the Confession gained the admiration of some of the Catholics, made those who wanted the Lutherans exterminated at all hazards all the more bitter. It is but too well known that it often happens that the very things which ought to remove prejudice, hatred, and malice, only serve to increase them.

* These and other examples of the favorable impression of the reading of the Confession are given by Schmid, *Life of Melancthon*, 211, and *Salig I.*, 225.

† Planck III., Part. 47, note.

‡ *Salig I.*, 211

The effects of the Confession were not, however, confined to the diet, but were soon felt throughout Europe, "It at least moderated the aversion which thousands of good persons cherished against Luther's doctrine only because they were offended by his violence and could not understand the strange man. By means of the power of its captivating mildness, with which it presented the most powerful truth, it extorted from some of their most decided opponents acknowledgments which were highly favorable to the sect. But the most fortunate and important effects of the Confession consisted in this, that outside of Germany, especially in France, Italy, and Spain (for soon, almost during the diet yet, it was spread throughout Europe), it disseminated more correct and favorable notions of the sect than had before this been generally held."*

Although the emperor ordered that the Confession should not be printed, it soon found its way into the hands of many persons. And during the diet yet some printer obtained an imperfect German copy and published it. Luther says that by command of the emperor it was sent to the various kings and princes of Europe. The theologians and princes at Augsburg sent copies to their friends at home. And during the diet it was translated into Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese.†

Upon the confessors the reading of the Confession had a very beneficial effect. The free and bold confession of their faith gave them fresh courage and nerved them for the great work yet to be performed. The very consciousness of having done their duty, prepared them for new duties. Of their Confession they were proud, as well they might be; and with pleasure they noticed the favorable impressions it made on their opponents. Before the whole diet their

* Planck III. part, I. 47.

† Chytræus states that the different foreign ambassadors at Augsburg translated it into their respective languages, and sent it to the courts they represented. See also Salig. I. 224. Since the diet, it has been translated into many languages. According to Danz, 38-40, it was translated into Danish in 1533, Dutch 1543, Greek 1559, English, French, and Polish 1561, Italian and Slavonic 1562, Bohemian 1576, Swedish 1581, Hungarian 1628, Finlandish 1651, Spanish 1661, Jewish-German 1732, Icelandic 1742.

cause was nobly vindicated, and the base calumnies, so zealously circulated, were refuted more successfully than could have been done in any private writings; for this answer to the foul slanders was official and authoritative. The Catholics themselves looked upon the reading of the Confession as a privilege and an honor, which some very reluctantly granted the Lutherans who, from the official recognition given them and their doctrines, received a fresh and powerful impulse. The step they thus took was one which necessarily demanded others for which it prepared the way. Not only the fact that they had done their duty, but also that they had overcome all the determined opposition of the majority of the diet against the reading of their Confession, encouraged and strengthened them. Then, the Confession also served as a bond of union for the confessors. It was a definite basis on which all could stand and unitedly attack their common foe and promote the cause of evangelical religion.

Luther was delighted. To Cordatus he writes July 6th: * “I am exceedingly glad to have lived to this hour in which Christ was publicly preached through his so great confessors, in so great an assembly, by means of so excellent a Confession. And the saying is fulfilled: ‘*I will speak of thy testimonies before kings,*’ and this has been fulfilled; ‘*and will not be ashamed;*’ for ‘*whosoever shall confess me before men,*’ (thus saith he who cannot lie,) ‘*him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.*’” To the elector of Saxony he wrote July 9th:† “The adversaries think they have done very well, because they had the preaching interdicted by an imperial command; but on the other hand these miserable men do not see that, through this written Confession which has been presented, more is preached than ten preachers could probably have done. Was it not real wisdom that Agricola and other preachers had to be silent. In their place the elector of Saxony, with other princes and lords, appeared with the written Confession, and freely preached before the emperor and the whole realm, so that they had to hear, and could

* De Wette, No. 1246.

† De Wette, No. 1250.

not resist. In this manner, I think, the prohibition of the preaching was completely violated. They will not let their servants hear the preachers, but they must themselves hear worse (as they call it) from such great lords, and be dumb. Christ, indeed, is not silent at the diet; and however mad they might be, they had to hear more from the Confession than they would have heard from the preachers in a whole year. Thus it happens, as Paul says: 'The word of God is not bound.' If it is prohibited in the pulpit, then it must be heard in the palace. If poor preachers are silenced, then great lords utter it. In fine, if all other things were dumb, the very stones would cry out, as Christ says."

The confessors having now presented their Confession very naturally expected the other party also to present a confession of their faith. They inferred that this would be done in compliance with the emperor's proclamation, according to which both parties were to be heard; this, they thought, could not be done fairly unless both parties presented their views, which could then be discussed and decided on by the diet. But whatever the intentions of the emperor may have been when he issued that proclamation, the Catholic members of the diet had no idea of presenting a confession of their faith, and refused to do so when urged by the Protestants. Instead of the fair discussion and gracious effort to remove the differences between the two parties, as promised in the proclamation, the Catholics at the diet regarded themselves as jury and judge, and their opponents as the party on trial. Their whole bearing indicated that they did not regard a comparison of their views with those of the evangelical party as at all necessary, since it was a foregone conclusion that they were right, and the Protestants wrong, and on this presumption they acted. They claimed to have inherited the faith of their fathers, to hold the doctrines of the Catholic church, and to have executed the edict of Worms against heretics; they therefore thought that none had a right to question their faith, and that, consequently, it was not necessary for them to present a confession. Carefully they avoided everything which might imply that they regarded their opponents as having equal rights with themselves, or which would indicate that their doctrines might be wrong and were on

trial. Then it must not be forgotten that it was really impossible for them to give anything like a full confession of the Catholic faith. Neither from the pope nor from the church had they received any authority to make such a confession. There were many doctrines which were not fixed into infallible decrees until the council of Trent met, of which doctrines, therefore, no one could say authoritatively what the church taught.

The Confession was now before the diet, and it must be decided what disposition should be made of it. On the 26th of June, the emperor assembled the Catholic members for the purpose of deciding this question. In this and other meetings various plans were proposed and discussed. The most violent of the Papists, who constantly opposed all fair dealing with their opponents, proposed simply to execute the edict of Worms against Luther and his adherents. Without discussion, without attempting by peaceable means to restore harmony, the sword, as the strongest argument of the church, was to be used in compelling the Protestants to accept the doctrines of the church of Rome.* This unreasonable and unjust proceeding was, however, opposed by the emperor and the more moderate members; no doubt they regarded such a course as highly inexpedient, even if they could have been persuaded that it was just. Others were in favor of giving the Confession into the hands of pious and learned theologians, to examine it and give their opinion of its merits, after which the decision of the whole matter should be left to the emperor. Of course, no one doubted that his decision would be against the confessors. The third view, which finally prevailed, was this, that a Confutation of the Confession should be prepared in the name of the emperor, which was to be read to the confessors, after which the emperor should give his decision; or, if

* Melancthon to Luther, June 27th, says: "Our Confession was presented last Saturday. Our opponents are now debating what answer to give; they run together; they use their united power to excite the princes against us, who, without this, are already sufficiently prejudiced. Eck takes the greatest pains with the archbishop of Mentz, to persuade him that the matter ought not to be investigated at all, since it has already been condemned. Our party is very weak the number of our adversaries is much greater."

they refused to submit to this, the old order of things should be restored until a general council was assembled.* The Spaniards who were with the emperor are said to have advocated another view; if the Protestants taught anything in the Confession which was contrary to the faith, then the emperor should destroy the sect; but that he should treat them more leniently if they only desired to reject some ceremonies, or to change what was merely external.† Campeggio, the papal legate, thought the dispute on the doctrinal articles was chiefly verbal. He wanted discussion to be avoided, thought a confutation ought to be read to the confessors, but ought not to be published, and that favors, promises, and threats ought to be used to bring them back to the church. *me*

A committee was appointed to prepare a refutation of the Confession. It consisted of about twenty theologians,‡ among whom were some of Luther's most bitter enemies, as Eck, Cochläus, Faber, and Wimpina. From such men neither a fair investigation, nor a favorable opinion could be expected. But the committee was a very able one, having in it some of the ablest men in the Catholic church.

The mild tone of the Confession, and the fact that it failed to mention some of the abuses which Luther had repeatedly attacked in his works, made the Papists suspicious that it did not give a full statement of the views of the Protestants. In order, therefore, to make the proposed confutation as complete as possible, and to avoid new issues

* Chyträus 96. Salig I. 226. On the 8th of July Melancthon wrote to Luther: "After our Confession was presented three opinions prevailed in the assembly of the princes. The first was the most severe, that the emperor should admonish all the princes and people to comply with the edict of Worms. The second was more mild, namely, that our Confession should be handed to honest, learned, and impartial men, to examine it, after which the emperor was to give his decision. This opinion King Ferdinand favored. The third one it seems will be adopted, that a Confutation of the Confession should be read to us; the emperor however wants us to commit the whole affair to his decision; but if we refuse to do this he commands us to restore the old order of things until a council is assembled."

† Salig. I. 227.

‡ Some historians say 19, some 20, some 22, and others 24.

afterwards, the emperor asked them whether they had any more articles to present? * This question was rather embarrassing, and if directly replied to, either affirmatively or negatively, might have involved them in new difficulties. Had they declared that they had other articles to present yet, then their sincerity in presenting the Confession would have been questioned. Had they, on the other hand, said they had nothing to ask except what was expressed in the Confession, then they would have denied themselves the right to reject other doctrines or abuses not mentioned. They consequently replied, that they expected to present no more articles at that time, but also stated that their Confession did not mention all things which they regarded as abuses, but contained only the principal doctrines preached among them. They, however, claimed the right of defending their confession, if attacked by their adversaries, and of opposing from Scripture other things which they regarded as abuses, if these things were adopted and advocated by their opponents. In this manner they tried to keep the way open for presenting and advocating their views on subjects not discussed in the Confession, if the occasion should demand this. †

* Seck. 1058. Førstemann II. 12-19.

† Melancthon's opinion was [Corp. Rep. No. 775.] that if articles on subjects on which the controversy had been most violent were now presented, the opposite party would charge them with hypocrisy in omitting them in their Confession: and the emperor would infer that they harbored many and dangerous errors, which they wanted to hide from him. He argued that it was not advisable to present such articles as the following :

- Whether all Christians are priests ?
- Whether the pope is by divine authority the supreme bishop ?
- Whether there are more or less than seven sacraments ?
- Whether private mass is necessary to salvation ?





CHAPTER V.

THREATENING ASPECT OF AFFAIRS AFTER THE READING OF THE CONFESSION.

IN the history of the great Reformation the diet of Augsburg forms an epoch, whose most important feature was the reading of the Confession. The crisis was attended with all the hopes and fears, doubts and anxieties, perplexing questions and conflicting emotions so common in great emergencies. The occasion having come when the results of the past must be concentrated into one focus, from which again shall emanate the light which illumines the future, it was very naturally a time of great mental activity and of deep emotions for the Evangelical party at Augsburg. The Papists regarded their cause as perfectly safe, and the results of the diet were already settled in their minds, hence they were less anxious. Being by far the stronger party physically, they had no doubt that all would end as they desired. They had determined that the diet must put an end to the religious disputes, and that this must be done by either inducing or else compelling the Protestants to abandon their faith. They imagined that this would be so much more easy than they afterwards found it, simply because they neither knew nor appreciated the motives and the spirit of the Lutherans; for men who are swayed by mere policy can never fully understand those who are controlled by convictions of duty and who act on principle. They placed much confidence in the fact that, in comparison with themselves, the few princes and cities who signed the Confession were a mere handful. The emperor, though much more inclined to mildness than many of his counselors, was to a great extent under their control. The majority, therefore, with every worldly advantage appa-

rently in their favor, acted with the assurance of men who are confident of success. Nor were the insolence and haughty bearing so common to majorities who are in the wrong, wanting, as was evident from their taunts and threats both in public and in private. In their charges against the evangelical party and in their conduct generally, they often manifested a spirit which better becomes conquerors than those whose contest is still undecided.

Very different indeed were the spirit and conduct of the other party. Many were the unfavorable indications which filled the Lutherans with apprehension. It was but too evident that a fair trial would not be given them, but that at the very outset they were to be treated as those who were already condemned. The truth of their doctrines, which they could not doubt, and the righteousness of their cause, on which God must smile, sustained them; but in this life grace seldom, if ever, so completely triumphs over natural fear as to produce that perfect and that deep peace which characterized Jesus in the greatest emergencies. And much of their fear arose from the fact that they felt their own weakness, and were conscious of the momentous importance of the occasion, in which a single error on their part might prove disastrous to the cause of truth, or to the welfare of those whom they represented and of succeeding ages. While acting conscientiously in doing what they regarded their duty, they were nevertheless prudent, cautious and anxious.

Of all the Protestants at Augsburg Melancthon was by far the most fearful, and the Catholics often tried to make use of this fact to their advantage. His fearfulness may partly be attributed to his natural timidity, and partly to the great responsibility which rested upon him. He was, in many respects, just the man for the occasion, and consequently acted so important a part in all the religious questions brought before the diet. Not only was he the most learned of the Protestants at Augsburg, but he was also the mildest. Many appreciated the truth as presented by him, who could not become reconciled to Luther's bolder and harsher statements. His gentle nature and moderate way of stating the truth made Melancthon more acceptable to the Catholics than any other Protestant; and if peace could

at all be secured, he was the best man to conduct the negotiations on the Lutheran side. But his fears were often such as greatly to embarrass him. During the preparation of the Confession as well as after its presentation, he was at times so gloomy, so controlled by his fears, that his friends became much concerned about him, and sometimes they were not a little annoyed at his weakness. Even the favorable impression made by the Confession on the diet, did not seem to cheer his spirits. He seemed to have no share in the general joy of the Protestants. The day after the Confession was read he wrote to Luther: "We are in the greatest misery here and must constantly shed tears. And to-day our consternation was increased after reading Veit's letter, informing us that you are so angry at us that you will not even read our letters. I will not, my dear father, aggravate my grief with words, but I beseech you to consider where, and in how great danger we are, in which without your consolation we have no comfort. The sophists and monks flock together daily that they may incense the emperor against us. The bishops of their own accord hate us cruelly. Friends who were formerly on our side are not there now. Being here alone and forsaken we are threatened with infinite dangers. I therefore beseech thee to regard us who follow thy authority in the most important affairs, or to regard the common welfare, and not refuse to read our letters and to reply to them, so that you may on the one hand direct our actions, and on the other console us."* The next day, June 27th, he wrote to Luther: "Never were your counsel and consolation more necessary to us than at present, since we live in the midst of the most dangerous affairs and have thus far indeed followed your authority. Therefore I beseech you for the sake of the glory of the Gospel to look upon us."† The same day on which this last letter was written Luther wrote to Melancthon: "I hate exceedingly the great anxiety with which you are troubled; that it so reigns in your heart, is not on account of the greatness of the affair, but on account of the greatness of your unbelief. For this same affair was greater at the

* Corpus Ref. II. No. 741.

† Corpus Ref. II. No. 745.

time of John Huss and many others than it is now. And though it is great, the Actor and Author is also great, for it is not our affair. Why then do you so perpetually torment yourself? If the cause is wrong, then let us recant; but if it is right why then do we make a liar in such great promises Him who commands us to be calm and unconcerned? He says: 'Cast thy burden on the Lord.' God is nigh unto all them that are distressed, who call on Him. Is this spoken to the wind, or does He cast it to beasts? I also am frequently agitated, but not perpetually. It is your philosophy which troubles you, not your theology, which also troubles your friend Joachim (Camerarius), who seems to me to be consumed with a similar anxiety; just as if by means of your useless anxiety you could effect anything. What more can the devil do than to kill us? I pray you, who in all other things are a warrior, to struggle against yourself, you being your greatest enemy who furnish Satan with such great weapons against yourself. . . . If I should hear that the affair will not stand well among you and is endangered, I shall hardly refrain from hastening to you that I may see the formidable array of Satan's teeth."

On the 29th Luther wrote him another letter, in which he again refers to his useless anxiety. But a long letter written by him to Melanchthon on the 30th, is entirely devoted to the discussion of his gnawing cares and the hopes which ought to encourage him. He argues that he himself has often been in greater anxieties, that then he was cheered by the comforting words of Melanchthon. God gave his own Son for them; if this be true, why so much fear and anxiety? Just as if after giving us his Son, He would not aid us in such unimportant affairs, or as if the devil was mightier than He. Luther is not afraid of the results, because their cause is right and true, and is the cause of Christ and of God. "If we fall, Christ himself, the Governor of the world, falls with us. And even if He should fall, I would rather fall with him than stand with the emperor." To cheer Melanchthon he quotes the promises of Scripture, and assures him that Christ is the world's conqueror, which consequently need no longer be feared. "Let us pray," he says, "with the apostles, Lord, increase

our faith." In closing this letter, which is so characteristic of the invincible faith of the great reformer, he says, after blaming Melanchthon for placing too much confidence in his own philosophy: "The Lord Jesus protect you, so that your faith may not decrease, but may increase and conquer. Amen. I pray for you, have prayed, and shall pray; neither do I doubt that I am heard, for I feel the Amen in my heart. If that is not done which we desire, that will notwithstanding be done which is better. For we expect a future kingdom at the very time when in this world all things fail." Luther at the same time wrote to Brentz and Spalatin to use their influence to encourage Melanchthon. In the letter to the latter he urges him to admonish Melanchthon that he should not make himself God, but should fight against that ambition which the devil planted in our breasts in the Garden of Eden. But this opinion of Luther respecting Melanchthon was probably too severe; for surely his aim was a higher one than merely to gratify his ambition. It was the welfare of the cause itself which made him so anxious; and his lack of faith in God as the Promoter of that cause, was the cause of his fear. But at times he overcomes this weakness. To Camerarius he wrote June 26th: "My mind is troubled with very gnawing cares, not on account of our cause, but on account of the carelessness of our men. Be not anxious on my account, for I commit myself to God." In spite of his natural timidity there was also a heroic element in his character. The day after the Confession was read he was called to an assembly of Catholic bishops and lords. The papal legate and others made violent threats against the little flock of believers, so that even courageous men might have trembled. But when asked, whether they would give up their doctrines? Melanchthon replied: "We cannot yield, nor can we forsake the truth; we pray, however, for the sake of God and Christ, that our opponents will not censure us for this, but that they will concede to us what we cannot with a good conscience abandon." When Campeggio heard this he exclaimed: "I cannot, I cannot, since the key (the church) cannot err." In reply to this thunder of the legate Melanchthon, though he stood, as it were, in the midst of wolves, answered bravely: "We commit our cause

to the Lord. If God be for us, who can be against us? Finally, come what may, we must await our good or ill fortune.”* It is only when we place ourselves in the midst of the circumstances of the occasion that we can fully appreciate such heroic utterances.

The Protestant princes often displayed a courage and determination which put the theologians to shame. Just after the signing of the Confession, Brentz wrote respecting the princes: “They are firm in their confession of the Gospel, and, indeed, when I think of their courage I blush with shame that we, who are but as beggars beside them, should so greatly fear his imperial majesty, whom we have not even seen yet.” They thought that more could be accomplished with their opponents by unflinching determination than if they gave indications of fear. The presence of the emperor, and the court, and the lords of the empire, and dignitaries of the church, inspired them with less awe than it did the theologians. They were also more accustomed to danger. But they too had their gloomy periods. The threats of their adversaries were aimed directly at them and their subjects. A great trust was committed to them; and they repeatedly proved that they were more anxious about this trust than they were about their own persons, and property, and lands. Their fear was a conscientious one, which was well calculated to make them more careful and lead them to trust God more and themselves less.

The favorable impression made by the Confession on the more moderate Catholics, served to increase the opposition of such men as Eck and Faber. No pains were spared to obliterate this impression and to crush every effort to make concessions to the Evangelical party. The most furious of the Papists, who claimed to be the loyal and orthodox party, backed by Rome, soon gained such power in the counsels of the emperor as to make the milder views of the more moderate party, and even the peaceable inclinations of the emperor, of little avail. They were willing to leave the decision of the religious question to the emperor,† for they knew that he would not decide contrary to their wishes.

* Schmidt, *Life of Melancthon*, 213. Corp. Ref. X. p. 197.

† Forstemann, II. 9.

But this was the very reason the Protestants could not accept him as umpire. Luther said:* "His imperial majesty shall be judge in this matter in so far as he decides nothing contrary to the word of God; for your electoral highness cannot place him above God, nor accept his decisions against God's word."

Various efforts were made to intimidate the Protestants by threats, or to win them by promises, so as to make the victory over them more easy and more certain. The delegates of the free cities, which had protested against the recess of the diet at Spires, were called on to accept that recess, and thus renounce their protest. Their reply, presented the next day June 27th, declared, however, that they could not accept that recess without violating their convictions of duty to God.†

The elector of Saxony and the landgrave of Hesse were repeatedly cited before the emperor, and all possible exertions were made to induce them to renounce their faith; but in vain.‡ Could these two have been won over by threats or promises, the rest would have been less formidable. Against the landgrave of Hesse four charges were made by the emperor. He had not complied with the edict of Worms, but had acted against it more grievously than any one else; he was charged with a lack of regard for the Lord's Supper; his imperial majesty had heard that during the absence of the emperor from the empire he had created all kinds of disturbances, and had entered into an alliance with several other princes against the emperor and the empire; and lastly, he was accused of sending to the emperor a book in which his majesty was attacked. The answer of Philip respecting the first three charges were tolerably satis-

* To the elector of Saxony, July 9th.

† Förstemann II. 6. This reply is signed by the cities of Strasburg, Nuremberg, Constance, Ulm, Reutlingen, Heilbronn, Memmingen, Lindau, Kempten, Windsheim, Isny, and Weissenburg. According to the reports of the delegates from Nuremberg, (Corp. Ref. II. No. 740;) 29 free imperial cities were represented at the diet.

‡ Corp. Ref. II. No. 756. "Und ihnen allerlei Practik und Partita vorgehalten, sie abwendig zu machen, aber man hat bei ihnen nichts erlangen mögen."

factory to the emperor, but the fourth charge was repeated, and the landgrave was admonished to submission, otherwise his majesty would act as became a Roman emperor. *

The aspect of affairs became more and more threatening. Immediately after the Confession was presented the confessors saw that there was but little hope of forming an agreement with their adversaries. So violent was the opposition of the Romish clergy that the delegates from Nuremberg wrote June 28th: "We cannot well see how unity can be restored, or an agreement formed, unless God works a special miracle."† Melanchthon, who heard of the various machinations of the Papists to induce the confessors to abandon their faith, and the violent threats against them if they refused, was almost driven to despair‡ and was in favor of making the greatest possible concessions for the sake of peace. He urged the elector to insist only on both the elements in the eucharist, and the marriage of priests, having no doubt that in all other matters peaceable terms could be agreed upon. Were both elements not allowed in the sacrament, then, he thought, many would absent themselves from the table of the Lord; and to depose the married priests would deprive the church of suitable pastors. Since it is so easy to find means for retaining the peace, it would be wicked and disastrous to go to war.§

The princes, desirous of leaving no means to obtain peace unemployed, sent Melanchthon to the papal legate to confer with him on the subject.|| Several letters were written by Melanchthon to the legate, requesting the privilege of an interview. He was well aware that this legate urged the emperor to commence war against the Protestants.¶ Not

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 760.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 750

‡ Osiander July 4th (Corp. Ref. II. No. 759); "*Philippus multis laboribus, vigiliis, curis maceratus et exhaustus nonnunquam melancholica quadam tristitia et quasi desperatione vexatur, nulla extante causa, quæ nostros plerosque valde dejecit.*"

§ Corp. Ref. II. No. 758

|| Corp. Ref. II. No. 762: "*Principes nostri miserunt nos ad R. D. V.*" See also No. 841.

¶ Corp. Ref. II. No. 730—Melanchthon to Myconius: "*Legatus Pontificius Campegius hortatur Cæsarem, ut bellum suscipiat contra nos.*"

only considering the religious dissensions, but also the political consequences of the Reformation, he advised the emperor to form a league with the Catholic princes, and use promises and threats to bring the Protestants back to the Church of Rome; if they are obstinate, then it will be right, to destroy these poisonous plants with sword and fire. Their goods are to be taken from them, which would be right, since they are only heretics. When they are once subdued inquisitors are to be appointed to hunt up those that may still remain. The university of Wittenberg must be put under the ban; those who studied there must be deprived of all imperial and papal favors; the books of heretics must be burnt; the monks must be restored to their monasteries.* If now the legate, who used his great influence at court to secure the adoption of this advice, could be induced to use his influence for peace, a great point would have been gained. Melanchthon had the more hope of accomplishing this because he had heard that the Spanish princes, who were asked their opinion about the matter, advised that, if the doctrines of the Protestants were contrary to the faith, the emperor should use all his power to suppress the sect; but if they only desired to change external human institutions, then no violence should be resorted to, which advice Melanchthon regarded as very wise.† His hopes were also encouraged by the arrival of Mary, sister of the emperor, who was favorably inclined towards the Protestants.‡ Others at court were known to favor peaceable counsels. Perhaps Campeggio could be inclined to peace, this at least was Melanchthon's hope.

The letters of Melanchthon to Campeggio on this occasion § are very humiliating, making one painfully conscious of the concessions the mildest and most learned of the reformers was most willing to make for the sake of peace. Desirous of making the conditions of peace as easy as possible for their opponents, Melanchthon writes thus to the bitter enemy of the Reformation and the representative of the pope: "We do not differ in doctrine from the Roman

* Ranke—Die Roemischen Pæbste. II. 111. Corp. Ref. II. p. 171.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 771.

‡ Corp. Ref. II. No. 770.

§ Corp. Ref. II. No. 761–763, dated July 6th and 7th.

Church. We have also checked many who tried to spread pernicious doctrines, of which the evidence is at hand. We are ready to obey the Roman Church, if she would only exercise the clemency which she always exercised towards all nations, so that she would overlook or grant certain little things which we could not now change even if we desired." The legate is urged to give no heed to those who propose violent counsel. He assures him: "We regard with reverence the authority of the Roman pontiff and his universal ecclesiastical government, if only the Roman pontiff does not reject us. Since, therefore, it is so easy to establish peace, if your equity would connive at small affairs and we would return to obedience in good faith, why is it necessary to reject us suppliants? . . . On no other account are we more hated in Germany than for the reason that we defend, with the greatest firmness, the doctrines of the Roman church. God willing, we shall remain faithful until death to Christ and the Roman church, even if you should refuse to accept us." War, he argues, will only increase the confusion. All that Melanchthon asks as the conditions of peace, is, both the elements in the eucharist, and the marriage of priests and monks.*

Could Rome have asked more? Or could the cause of the Reformation have suffered more than to have made peace with Rome on such conditions? The cunning legate granted the interview on the 8th of July. Campeggio addressed him with kind words, and discussed the matter in a friendly manner. He informed him that he could concede the use of both elements, and the marriage of priests, but not that of the monks. Although he had power to make certain concessions, he thought it not advisable to use it without the consent of the princes, hence he promised nothing definite.†

Melanchthon was disappointed, and suspected that Eck and Cochlæus had been with the legate to put him into a mood unfavorable for peace.

Luther was of course opposed to such efforts to form an

* Appendix D.

† Melanchthon to Veit. Corp. Ref. II. No. 764, 765.

agreement with their adversaries. To Melanchthon he wrote July 13th: "I think that you, my dear Philip, have now learned from experience, that it is impossible to conciliate Belial and Christ, nor ought the hope of union, as far as doctrine is concerned, to be cherished. . . . For my part, I will not yield a hair's breadth, nor will I suffer any restitutions to be made; I would rather suffer the worst evils." Melanchthon's experience with Campeggio had to some extent opened his eyes; but he blamed Eck and Cochlæus, not the legate. Luther, however, had no confidence in the Italians. To Jonas he wrote: "They are scoundrels. If an Italian is good, he is very good; this however is an exception, just as a black swan."

An allwise Providence saved the Reformation from the disgrace to which some of its friends would have submitted for the sake of peace. Neither the timid counsels of friends, nor the wicked machinations of enemies were allowed to triumph. The needle may tremble, may move to the right and the left, but it cannot rest until it points again to the pole star. Whatever fears the Protestants entertained, however much for the moment these caused them to vacillate, they could not gain dominion over them, nor decide the course to be pursued. Sometimes Luther's heroic words struck down these fears; sometimes the princes rose far above all fear at the very moment the decisive word was to be spoken. Again and again conscience, the fear of God, and the love of his Word proved their superiority to all human fears. Often the Papists defeated their own plans by refusing to accept the conditions of peace offered them and by demanding still more concessions. Their very threats strengthened the determination of the Protestants who grew in moral strength by the very effort to overcome these threats.

Yet the Catholics were slow to learn that their threats could not accomplish their ends; hence they kept repeating and increasing them, and always with the same result.

Frederick the Wise, elector of Saxony and first protector of Luther, had died without a son as his heir. According to the established law his oldest brother became his successor. In this manner John, called the Steadfast, became the elector of Saxony. He had repeatedly requested the emperor

to invest him with the electoral dignity, and also to confirm the marriage of his son John Frederick, the prime electoral, with Sibylla, daughter of the duke of Juliers and Cleve. The emperor had promised to comply with these requests, and was expected to do so on his entrance into Germany. But the matter was postponed till the 16th of July, when the emperor informed the elector that his wishes could not be complied with, nor must he expect any favor from his majesty, unless he renounced the Lutheran doctrines and returned to the church of Rome.*

The elector sought the advice of his theologians and counselors, and on the 21st gave his reply to the emperor.† Being his brother's legitimate heir he claimed the right to the investiture, which right the diet of Worms had acknowledged. The emperor had charged him with forming an alliance with the Swiss against the emperor, which charge the elector also refutes. But the most important part of the reply is the justification of his faith. He appeals to the fact that he had complied with the emperor's proclamation by presenting the Confession, in the Preface of which he and the other confessors offered to do all in their power to form an agreement with their opponents, so that all might be brought to one and the same religion as all are and fight under Christ; and everything that is consistent with God's will and with conscience, which can promote Christian union, is cherished by him and his allies. If it can be proved that he teaches anything contrary to Scripture he will gladly renounce it. Whilst again declaring his adherence to the Confession, not because it had been presented, but because he believed it to be in harmony with God's word, he regards himself as bound by that Confession only in so far as it corresponds with the Scriptures. But God's word he cannot renounce. He beseeches the emperor to consider well the importance of the affair, which pertains to God's glory and the salvation of souls, and prays him to convene a general Christian council which has repeatedly been asked for at various diets, in which council the religious questions can be settled. He closes by again prom-

* Corp. Ref. No. 788. Seck. 1060.

† Förstemann II. 118.

ising to obey the emperor in all things as far as God's word and his conscience will permit.*

A few days after this the emperor, clothed in splendid apparel, invested a number of princes with their dignities,† but not the elector of Saxony. Firm and determined as the elector was, he nevertheless felt keenly the treatment received. He complains that he is unfavorably reported to the emperor by his own cousin, duke George of Saxony, and that the emperor had not spoken a word to him.‡ But his gloom and his apprehensions had no effect on his preference of God's favor to that of the emperor. Nor did the advice given him, to let the preachers and hearers of the gospel profess it on their own responsibility without subjecting the princes to any risk.§ prevent the elector from taking on himself the responsibility of permitting and encouraging the preaching of the gospel in his land.

Similar means were used to bring the margrave of Brandenburg back to the Romish Church. On the 15th of July the emperor sent the margrave's cousins and brothers to him, promising him the emperor's favor if he abandoned his doctrines, and threatening his displeasure if he persisted in them. In his reply the 19th of July he gave the reasons for his faith and why he could not abandon it, in a spirit similar to that which breathed in the reply of the elector of Saxony.||

Besides these efforts to intimidate the Protestant princes and cities, various rumors were spread among them which were well calculated to increase their apprehensions. To

* In the various answers of the Protestants at this diet to the charges of the Catholics, we find not only the same spirit, but the same thoughts and words occur repeatedly, namely: that their conscience compels them to pursue the course adopted, that they cannot act contrary to God's word, that they are willing to abandon all in the Confession contrary to this word, that they will do all that can conscientiously be done for the sake of peace, and if at the diet no union is formed then they appeal to a council to decide the matter.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 814.

‡ Seck. 1061.

§ Fœrstemann II. 90.

|| Corp. Ref. II. 788. The reply of the margrave to his relatives—the electors of Mentz and Brandenburg and the margraves Frederick and John Albert—is found in Fœrstemann II. 93.

the constant rumors respecting the warlike counsel of the Catholic theologians, and the intrigues and machinations of princes, was added the report that the ambassadors from the Italian princes (especially Venice), and from the king of France, were urging the emperor at once to strike a decisive blow against the Lutherans, and for this purpose offered him their assistance.* Melanchthon says:† “The pope has urged the emperor not to enter into any discussions, but at once to march an army into Germany and suppress the Protestants by force.” He also heard the report that the emperor was enlisting French soldiers for the purpose of using them against Switzerland and the free cities. Eck and Faber, Melanchthon states, were doing their utmost to induce the emperor to follow the pope’s advice.

But on the other hand encouraging letters came from different parties to assure the confessors of their sympathy and prayers, and to urge them to stand up boldly for the truth. From Venice itself Melanchthon received heroic counsel not to desert the truth, nor not fear death itself for the cause of Christ.‡ On the 29th of July the city of Magdeburg wrote to the elector of Saxony: “You are now engaged in an important affair in which all Christendom is interested. Since you are in much trouble in a foreign land, meeting no doubt with much opposition, and waging a severe warfare under the banner of Christ, we daily ask God to grant you strength, patience, and grace, and in the cause of Christ a glorious victory, which we are earnestly expecting, though we are submissive to the will of God.”§

On the 27th of July an order was issued forbidding the publication and sale at Augsburg of all books which had not been examined and approved by a committee appointed by the emperor.|| This of course was aimed at the books of Lutherans, for no efforts were made to prevent the circulation of the books of the Catholic theologians filled with the most unjust and bitter attacks against Luther and his ad-

* Corp. Ref. II. No 791.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 794.

‡ Corp. Ref. II. No. 801.

§ Förstemann, II. 181.

|| Seck. 1062.

herents. Among others, Dr. Cochläus published and circulated a book in which he attempted to prove that Luther often contradicted himself in his books. On the title page were seven heads, representing so many different Luthers, symbolical of the contradictions in his writings. These heads had different names, the first Doctor, the second Martin, the third Luther, the seventh Barabbas. Each head had some peculiar ornament also intended to be symbolical; that called Luther was enveloped in flames. But however strong the proof that Luther, as he removed farther and farther away from Romish superstition and progressed in scriptural truth, changed his views, this could not effect the aim of the Protestants at Augsburg, for they distinctly declared that they were there to defend the doctrines of Scripture and not the views of Luther. Nuremberg instructed its delegates not to call themselves Lutherans, nor appeal to any human authority in doctrinal matters, but only to the word of God.*

Although Luther had lost all hope that a doctrinal agreement between the opposite parties was possible, he still cherished the hope that peace might be secured. With this end in view he addressed a letter to the elector of Mentz who was inclined to peace and for this reason had opposed the warlike counsel of Eck and others.† Their opponents, Luther says in this letter, will not accept the Confession, nor can they refute it; their cause is such that it cannot bear the light. Whilst urging the elector, the first prelate of Germany, to use his influence for the promotion of peace, he yields nothing in doctrine. The letter is strikingly characteristic of Luther. It is very bold, at times actually defiant, so that we wonder how its author could expect it to promote peace, unless he thought that this end could be accomplished by showing with what determination every effort to suppress by violence the true doctrines, would be resisted.‡ Throughout the whole the

* Seck. 1109.

† This letter, written July 6th, was sent to the elector July 18th. Seck. 1097. The whole letter is found in De Wette.

‡ Cochläus called it a poisonous letter. It might with more propriety be called a sermon urging the Papists to repent and forsake their evil ways.

idea runs that the enemies of the Reformation are the enemies of God and are fighting against his cause, for which reason their counsel must come to naught. Ingeniously the second Psalm, with its application, is woven into the letter verse by verse. The spirit of the letter may be inferred from the following sentiments near the close: "I am no prophet, but I pray you all, my lords, be very careful, and do not imagine that you are acting with men only, when you act with the pope and his adherents, but with devils themselves; for back of the whole affair there is nothing but the devil's tricks, that I know. God the Almighty help you, that everything may tend to promote peace, Amen."

To the clergy assembled at Augsburg Luther sent an earnest "Admonition."* Its aim is also to promote peace. Luther, however, calls the abuses by their right names, and severely blames the priests for tolerating them. He warns them not to continue in their iniquity, and not to attempt the destruction of the Gospel by force, as that might prove their own destruction. He uses mild, even affectionate language, in order that he may touch their hearts. He calls them "dear lords," appeals to their consciences, applies passages of Scripture to them, and shows throughout that the sole aim of his teaching is, to advocate the pure Gospel uncorrupted by the traditions of men. He commences with the apostolic benediction: "Grace and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ." He writes to them, he says, because his conscience impels him heartily and in a friendly manner to beseech, beg, and admonish them not to neglect to do their duty at the diet. He tells them of his earnest prayers in their behalf that God would enlighten their minds and nerve their hearts to fear his Word, and assures them that he delights to pray for them. But with all his mildness and touching appeals, Luther does not fail to reproach the priests as the vilest sinners who ought to repent at once. There is indeed in this admirable "Admonition" a mingling of the law and the Gospel, of fearful

* Though written in April and May it seems not to have been circulated at Augsburg before the month of July, according to the testimony of Chytræus. Seck. 1098.

denunciation and tender persuasion, such as can scarcely be found anywhere except in the Bible. It reminds one forcibly of the ancient prophets, threatening God's judgments, yet appealing to his mercy, to drive or win the people to repentance. We see in this letter, as perhaps in no other, the entire Luther, with his great heart susceptible of all emotions from the most affectionate to the harshest. Whilst appealing to the hearts of the Papists he also pricks their consciences. His mildness and tenderness are followed by passages like the following: "It is our greatest desire, and most humble prayer, that you may glorify God, may learn to know yourselves, to repent and improve." If you do not, know this: if I live, I will be your plague; If I die, I will be your death. For God has set me at you, I must (as Hosea says) be a bear and a lion in the way of Assyria. My name shall let you have no peace until you either do better or are destroyed."





CHAPTER VI.

THE PAPAL CONFUTATION OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION.

THE papal theologians who were appointed to prepare a refutation of the Confession, found their task more difficult than they had anticipated. The work was divided between them. Each one was to reply to a certain part of the Confession. Either Cochlæus or Faber then took the results of all their labors and from them formed a "Confutation," as it was called. The slow progress made by them was displeasing to the emperor as well as the Protestants. Repeatedly the former urged them to complete their work as soon as possible; but not till the 13th of July did they present him with their reply to the Confession. With it were also presented a number of writings against the Protestants.

The spirit of the document may be inferred from the men chiefly concerned in its preparation. It naturally partook of their own bitter hatred of Luther. They were the most violent of the Papists. One of the committee, Dr. John Mensing, was disposed to be somewhat moderate in his views, and for this reason the other members excluded him from their deliberations. The Confutation prepared by them was very long and very abusive,* which made it contrast very unfavorably with the conciseness and mildness of

* Melancthon to Luther, July 14th, Corp. Ref. II. No. 781: "Eck with his band has handed the emperor a refutation of our Confession. Although it has not yet been made public I have nevertheless learned through friends that it is a lengthy document and full of abuse."

the Confession. It covered two hundred and eighty pages. The document greatly displeased the emperor,* both on account of its violence and immoderate length. Brentz says of this draft of the Confutation,† that it was "so confused, insipid, violent, fierce and bloodthirsty, that it would have been a disgrace to have read it before the diet. It has been returned in order that it may be improved and made more mild. We experience daily that by means of our Confession we have so stupified and bewildered them that they do not know where to begin or end." The committee was therefore compelled to revise their work with the view of abbreviating and moderating it.

The Protestants became heartily tired of the diet. They complained of their expenses which were heavy.‡ Nor did their stay seem to be of any use, as there seemed to be no hope of coming to an understanding with their opponents. Luther thought the confessors had done their duty in presenting their Confession, and that it was not worth while for them to wait for the Confutation. For he thought their adversaries would cry only: "The fathers, the fathers, the fathers, the Church, the Church, the Church, practice, custom, but would prove nothing from Scripture.§" The emperor he is certain will decide against them. He urges them to leave the diet: "Home! home!" he cries to them; and the elector of Saxony and Philip of Hesse were actually preparing to leave the diet.||

The Catholic theologians found it very difficult to revise their draft of the refutation so as to make it acceptable to the emperor. Repeatedly, when they thought their Confutation was finished, they were obliged again to revise and alter it. Mildness in replying to the evangelical doctrines was so foreign to their usual method, as their books against

* Spalatin says that the emperor so crumpled and crushed the 280 pages that only 12 remained entire, a fact which greatly incensed Dr. Eck.

† Luther to Isenmann July 15th, Corp. Ref. No. 784.

‡ The elector complained that he had been obliged to borrow 12,000 florins. Seck. 1061.

§ July 15th, to the theologians at Augsburg: "Patres, Patres, Patres, Ecclesia, Ecclesia, Ecclesia, usus, consuetudo audituri estis, præterea e Scripturis nihil."

|| Corp. Ref. II. No. 815.

the Reformation showed,* that it was next to impossible to exercise it now. Yet the emperor demanded a mildness which would compare favorably with the tone of the Confession.† Five different drafts of the Confutation were prepared before one was found that satisfied the emperor.‡ In three days the theologians had promised the Confutation; but it was nearly twice as many weeks from the reading of the Confession to the reading of the Confutation.

On the third day of August the emperor assembled the diet, in the same chapel in which the Confession had been read, for the purpose of hearing the Confutation. Palsgrave Frederick announced to the confessors that the emperor had himself carefully examined their Confession, and had given the same to distinguished and learned theologians of different nations, to prepare a reply to the same, which would now be read. The emperor hoped the Protestants would accept the same, otherwise he would have to use forcible means to heal the schism in Germany.§ A German and Latin copy had been prepared in the name of the emperor. The former was read to the diet by Alexander Schweiss, secretary of the emperor.|| At the close the confessors were exhorted to accept the confutation and unite again with the Catholics, otherwise the emperor would act in a manner becoming the highest protector of the Holy Catholic Church.

* Most of the members of the committee had written books violently attacking Luther and his doctrines.

† Melancthon to Luther July 27th: "The Confutation of our opponents has not yet been published to us, and I learn that the cause of the delay is that they improve the same at the emperor's request and remove herefrom the abusive expressions."

‡ Melancthon thinks that Faber, court preacher of king Ferdinand, was the principal author of the Confutation. Corp. Ref. II. No. 829.

§ Melancthon to Luther August 6th, Corp. Ref. II. No. 854: "We have at last heard the Confutation on the 8th of August, and the decision of the emperor, which is very severe. For before the Confutation, was read the emperor said that he expected to abide by the views therein set forth, and desired our princes to do the same; if they refused he, as defender of the church, would no longer tolerate the schism in Germany."

|| Brentz, Corp. Ref. II. No. 818, speaks contemptuously of the emperor's neutrality, which he proved by sleeping both during the reading of the Confession and Confutation.

This was very plain. There was but one of two things left for the confessors—to abandon their Confession and accept the Confutation, or else to decide the whole matter by an appeal to arms. This then was the fairness and good-will which the emperor promised in his proclamation! The promise of kindness and affection meant: ‘Accept the conditions of the Romish church, and all is well; if you reject them, you will be forced to accept them!’—The Protestants, as the guilty party, would be pardoned, if they would but renounce their faith, otherwise their sentence was already pronounced.

It was so self-evident that the confessors could not at once accept the Confutation, that the request that they should do so showed how little the papists had improved the many opportunities given them to learn the spirit of the Protestants. Neither the time nor the opportunity had been given them fairly to weigh the contents of the Confutation, and therefore they could not say what in it they could accept, and what they must reject. Some of them had, indeed, taken notes during the reading; but the document itself was not in their hands. After consultation with each other they, therefore, replied through Bruck, that the emperor had promised to deal fairly with both parties; that they were willing to do their utmost, as far as conscience would permit, to promote peace and unity; and they requested a copy of the Confutation, so that they might carefully weigh its contents and might be able to give a definite answer to the emperor’s decision. No request could have been more reasonable, and it is surprising that a copy was not given them even without asking for it; but it is still more surprising that when made it was not at once granted. Before the emperor answered he held a long consultation with his brother and the other Catholics, and then replied; that, as it was already late, he would take the matter into consideration and reply at some future time. On the 5th he answered, that he was desirous of acting in accordance with his proclamation, and would therefore have a copy of the Confutation presented to them, but on these conditions—that they were not to reply to it, nor hand in any more writings on the subject, nor should they allow any one to publish or circulate the Confutation.* They were

* Förstemann II. 179. This reply gives a striking evidence of the confidence of the Papists in their Confutation.

also exhorted to accept the Confutation as the condition of union with the Papists.

These conditions were such as to make the offer of the Confutation virtually a refusal, for they made its possession useless to them, since they could not reply to it. It was only offered to them to avoid the disgrace of an unconditional refusal. On such conditions the document could not be accepted. Through Bruck the confessors, therefore, requested the privilege of replying to the Confutation. The emperor was willing to grant this request, but wanted them to reply briefly and speedily, since he was desirous of hastening on to other matters. The request not to let the Confutation be circulated or published was made again and again, so that the confessors saw the danger connected with its possession, since some one might in some way copy or publish it without their knowledge, in which case the blame would have been attached to them. The confessors therefore, decided not to accept a copy, but to use the notes they had taken during the reading in preparing a reply.*

The confutation itself was too weak to cause the Protestants any alarm or to shake their faith in their doctrines. Luther says,† that it was prudent in the papists to keep their Confutation secret, "for they feel that it is a corrupt, base, cold thing, so that they would have to be ashamed if it were published and were permitted to see the light, or if a reply to it were tolerated. For I know well the highly learned doctors who for six weeks cooked away at the thing, to see if they could make any fair show before the ignorant. But when it appears on paper it has neither hands nor feet, but lies in a foul heap as if a drunkard had vomited it. . . . They discovered when the Confession of our party was read that many of our opponents were surprised and acknowledged that it was pure truth and that it could not be refuted from Scripture. But when, on the other hand, the Confutation was read, they hung their heads, and by their

* Foerstemann II. 180. Corp. Ref. II. No. 826. Camerarius, who was present at the reading of the Confutation, as well as others took notes. Corp. Ref. II. No. 832.

† In his "Warning to his dear Germans," Dantz 25. Walch XVI. 1975.

looks and movements confessed that in comparison with our Confession it was a base and foul thing. But our party and many pious hearts were greatly rejoiced and strengthened, when they learned that our opponents, with all their power and art, which on this occasion they exerted to their utmost, could not produce anything else than such base replies which now, God be praised, a woman, a child, a layman, a peasant is strong enough to refute from Scripture. And this is really the reason why they refused to present a copy of the Confutation. Their own wicked consciences reprove them and they are afraid of the reply the truth would make." In another work* Luther says the Papists know that the assertion, that the Confession was refuted by the Gospel, is an infamous lie. By means of this assertion they merely want to make as fair a show of their "defective, leprous, and polluted affair as possible. Their heart thought: Our affair is bad, this we very well know; but if we say that the cause of the Lutherans has been refuted, that is enough: who will compel us to retract this lie?" And he thought the best evidence that such assertions were false, was the fact that the Papists refused to publish their Confutation; for if it really refuted the Confession they would have given a copy to the confessors without being asked for it, would have published it everywhere, and would have proclaimed it with trumpets and drums.

The emperor's decision when the Confutation was read, was indeed very unfavorable to the confessors. But the character of the document was such that it served greatly to increase their confidence in their doctrines, whilst it proved the weakness of their opponents. Its reading, therefore, had a cheering effect on them in spite of the threats that were made. Melancthon says: "So childish is the Confutation that its reading was followed with great joy. . . . All good and wise men seem to me to be greatly encouraged after hearing the childish Confutation. Our princes could now more easily obtain peace if they would entreat the emperor and the more discreet princes."*

* Glossen auf das vermeynte kaiserl. Edict—Walch XVI. 2020.

† To Luther, August 6th. Corp. Ref. No. 824.

"The calumnious theologians desired to clothe themselves in a lion's skin in order that they might appear the more terrible to us. I, however, perceive that after the reading, the pious men of our party were strengthened in their convictions, and even the reasonable men among our adversaries are said to be angry that such insipid stuff was thrust on the emperor. We are now waiting to learn what course is to be pursued with us. The emperor plainly shows what his view of the matter is; nevertheless the more reasonable of the princes are still considering means for the preservation of peace. May Christ grant us peace."* Melancthon thought that on account of its weakness, the Papists were prudent in withholding a copy from them, because it was a disgrace to the emperor in whose name it was presented.

Spalatin says:† "The Confutation of our opponents is so childish and confused that some of the distinguished papal princes are ashamed of it, in consequence of which we have become much more courageous. . . . If, as is proper, they hand us their Confutation, it will be to their disgrace; if they do not, it will be to their dishonor, and a sure sign that they are ashamed of it."

Brentz says of the Confutation:‡ "Verily, a most stupid fabrication, so that I feel the disgrace attached to the Roman name, because they did not procure in their church men who could at least reply prudently and respectfully to us heretics. . . . They act ridiculously. The emperor wants us to accept his faith, yet does not know whether to give us the Confutation. . . . If he refuses to give us the confession of his faith, then we have the greatest reason for not accepting that faith; if he gives it to us we shall reply to it fully."

The Confutation§ consists of a Preface, an examination

* Same date. Corp. Ref. II. No. 822, also 828.

† Salig. I. 276.

‡ Corp. Ref. II. No. 818.

§ Although the emperor refused to give the confessors a copy of the Confutation, except on conditions which made it advisable for them not to accept it, Melancthon, nevertheless, somehow succeeded in procuring a copy before the close of the diet. The copy found in Chytræus, and one published by Schœpff, 1830, were used in preparing this sketch of the Confutation.

of the various articles of the Confession, and an Epilogue.* In the Preface, which is quite short compared with that of the Confession, the emperor's desire to promote God's glory, the welfare of souls, Christian harmony and public peace, is given as the motive for the preparation of the Confutation. That this might be accomplished, distinguished men of different nations had been requested to examine the Confession, and earnestly exhorted to approve and praise all that was found to be right and Catholic, to note whatever was contrary to the Catholic faith and give their opinions on the same. The emperor and the other Catholic princes found the Confutation in harmony with the sacred Scriptures, for which reason, so the Preface closes, the emperor ordered the Confutation to be read in the presence of the Protestant princes and states, "so as to remove all dissensions from our orthodox holy communion and religion."

The Confession is then discussed article by article. The points of agreement as well as disagreement with the Catholic doctrines are noticed and a refutation of the latter is attempted. Of the doctrinal articles some were accepted entirely or in part, whilst others were condemned.† The articles on abuses were all rejected. The tone of the Confutation like that of the Confession, is mild, and the doctrines of the Romish Church are not represented as being in as irreconcilable conflict with those of the Protestants as was commonly ~~done~~ by the enemies of the Reformation. As proof of the doctrines stated, passages of Scripture as well as from the fathers are quoted; the latter are, however, much more frequently cited than in the Confession, and from Scripture the apocryphal books are quoted as well as the canonical.

Of the doctrinal articles in the Confession those which treat of faith and good works are, as might have been expected, most severely attacked in the Confutation; yet the

* The Preface and Epilogue were not prepared by the committee of theologians; they had their origin in the immediate surroundings of the emperor. Förstemann II. 142. Schöpf 14.

† The following articles of the Confession were accepted as Catholic: 1, 3, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19; received in part, 2, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 20; entirely rejected, 7, 8, 21.

Romish doctrine of the merit attached to good works, was not presented in the same light as was generally done by Catholic theologians; there was in fact an approach to the Protestant doctrine on this point. In the 4th article of the Confutation it is claimed that good works are meritorious, that is, they deserve a reward in God's eyes; and as proof those passages of Scripture are quoted which speak of reward for good deeds. But this meritorious character of good works is so explained that it is made to depend entirely on God's grace, thus in part yielding the point the reformers were contending for. The Confutation says: "All good Catholics confess that our works of themselves merit nothing, but that God's grace makes them worthy of eternal life." In the 20th article the same doctrine is taught: "We know that our good works are nothing, and are not meritorious except by virtue of Christ's sufferings." Nor was the doctrine of the Confession, article 13th, that the sacraments in order to be efficacious demand faith, attacked, though the Papists generally represented them as effective even without this faith (*opus operatum*). An effort was thus made to save the Romish doctrine of the necessity of good works, whilst at the same time their meritorious character is made to depend on God's grace through Christ. The 4th article of the Confession teaches that for our righteousness we are dependent on God's grace for Christ's sake, but that faith on our part is necessary. But no merit is ascribed to this faith. On account of it righteousness is imputed unto us; but it is only regarded as the channel through which God's grace is communicated, the hand stretched out to receive the blessings which God offers in Christ. This faith (article 6th) is such that it must necessarily bring forth good works, which works, however, are not meritorious, "for we receive forgiveness of sins and justification through faith in Christ." But the 4th article of the Confutation does not even mention faith as the necessary condition for the performance of good works, though it is acknowledged that they are performed by the assistance of divine grace. The connecting link between God's grace and good works, namely faith, is thus omitted. The Confutation as well as the Confession rejects the Pelagian doctrine that man can be saved by his own powers; but

the Confession in the doctrine of justification lays the stress on God's grace and faith; the Confutation on God's grace and good works; the Confession claims no merit at all for faith, the Confutation claims that good works are meritorious, though it is God's grace that makes them so.

The prominence given to faith in the Confession is repeatedly attacked. The Catholics either would not, or could not understand the meaning of faith as used by the reformers, for they repeatedly speak of the necessity of uniting with faith love and good works, which the latter regarded as either included in faith, or as necessarily resulting from it.*

The Confutation in the 12th article wants repentance to be regarded as consisting of three parts, remorse, confession and atonement.† It also rejects the doctrine that faith is a part of repentance, as taught in article 12 of the Confession. On the other hand it teaches that faith must precede repentance, "for he who does not believe will never repent." The last clause in this article of the Confession, which rejects those who teach that through our own atonement we receive forgiveness and not through faith, is also attacked by the Confutation which declares that the rejection of this

*The reformers used the term faith in the sense in which the Apostle Paul uses it, while the Catholics used it in the sense of the Apostle James. Faith, as Luther understood it, includes love, hope, peace and all the Christian graces, and it is its very nature to bring forth good works. He says: "Believers are a new creature, a new tree; therefore all those expressions so common in the law are not applicable to them, such as this: a believer ought to do good works. Just as it is not proper to say: the sun *shall* shine, a good tree *shall* bear good fruit, three and seven *shall* be ten. For it is not proper to say the sun shall shine, because without command it does it naturally, since it is made for that very purpose; so a good tree without command bears good fruit; and three and seven are ten, and are not first to become ten by command. In these cases therefore we are not first to command what shall be, but we are to speak of that which already is." Luther thus regards it just as natural and necessary for faith to produce good works as it is for the sun to shine, and for three and seven to make ten. To him true faith without good works seems impossible and absurd.

† "Genugthuung" in German; "Satisfactio" in Latin. The idea is, that which makes amends or satisfies. Atonement seems to come nearest the meaning of the original.

atonement on our part is contrary to the teachings of the Scriptures, the fathers, the councils and the whole Catholic Church.

The doctrine of the Confession on the nature of the sacraments is regarded as Catholic. The Confutation as well as the Confession regards the sacraments not merely as signs by which Christians may be known, but also as signs and evidences of God's will toward us, and as means through which grace is communicated. But the Confutation wants the Confession to recognize distinctly seven sacraments.

The article of the Confession on baptism is accepted as Catholic without any objection whatever.

The article on the Lord's Supper is not objected to as it stands; but it is stated in the Confutation that something more ought to be added to it. In order to justify the withholding of the cup from the laity, it is demanded that to this article ought to be added the statement that the whole Christ is present in each of the elements. It is also desired that it should be added that through God's almighty word and the act of consecration the substance of the bread is changed into the body of Christ.

In the 21st article the Confutation tries to prove that saints ought to be petitioned to pray for us. The article in the Confession is denounced as heretical. The principal arguments for petitioning saints to intercede for us, are drawn from the general consent of the church, and from the fathers; hence these are placed first, after which a number of irrelevant passages of Scripture are quoted. The most convincing argument is, that the Protestant doctrine has repeatedly been condemned as heretical.

But the greater part of the Confutation discusses the articles on abuses. By their extraordinary zeal in defending these abuses the Papists proved their earnest desire to retain them. They evidently were much more anxious about them than about their doctrines; and one cannot avoid the suspicion that in discussing the doctrinal articles they laid special stress on their doctrine of the merits of good works for the purpose of defending the many abuses resulting from this very doctrine. On the doctrinal articles the Confutation is weak enough; but some parts of the articles on abuses are so silly, that one is surprised that men who

made any pretensions to learning could seriously present such stuff as arguments. To prove that the cup should be withheld from the laity a number of passages are quoted from the Bible, whose palpable perversion shows how difficult it was to defend this abuse. One instance will suffice. The Confutation states that the difference between the communion of the priests and the laity is beautifully foretold in the Old Testament. "God says 1 Sam. ii. 36: 'And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thine house shall come and crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, Put me I pray thee, into one of the priest's offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.' Here the Holy Scriptures already teach, that the descendants of Eli, when the priesthood was taken from them, desired to receive a priest's portion, a piece of bread. So the laity should also be satisfied with one of the elements, a priest's portion. For the Roman popes, cardinals, bishops, and priests, except during mass, take only one of the elements, which they would not do if both were necessary to salvation."

The article on Celibacy is also full of irrelevant quotations. The Protestants are requested to show where God commands priests to marry. The declaration of Paul, according to which forbidding to marry is a doctrine of devils, is pronounced correct; but the church does not forbid to marry, but only forbids the marriage of priests. Gen. i. 28, is thus explained in the language of St. Jerome: "It was necessary first to plant a forest and let it grow in order that afterwards there might be building materials. Therefore it was also commanded to be fruitful and multiply, in order that the earth might be replenished; but since it is replenished, and is so filled that one almost crushes another, it is now no more a command to those who can live continently."

The various institutions of the church, as fasts, holidays, etc., etc., are to be strictly observed; for all government is of God, especially the spiritual government of the church. The hierarchy is defended; the authority of the clergy, whether based on law or custom, is not to be disturbed.

The need of a reformation is acknowledged, but a council to accomplish it, which was the earnest desire of the Pro-

testants and the better portion of the Romish church, is not mentioned.

In the Epilogue it is stated that the emperor had learned from the Confession, as well as from the Confutation, that, the confessors agreed with the Catholic and Romish church in many articles, and do not favor many of the errors spread through Germany; they are accordingly admonished to agree with that church also on points on which they have heretofore differed. If they do not do this, then "let them remember that they compel his imperial majesty to attend to this matter as becomes a Roman and Christian emperor, and a defender and advocate of the church."

Every one who candidly compares the Confession with the Confutation, must be struck with the great superiority of the former. Well might the confessors rejoice when the latter was read, for its puerilities convinced them of the real weakness of their opponents. In examining the Confession we find that its teachings are the result of deep convictions, and that they were held by the confessors because they felt their truth. Its doctrines are drawn directly from Scripture, hence Scripture affords the principal proofs, and the authority of the fathers and the church in general, is only secondary. In examining the Confutation, on the other hand, it becomes evident that often the defence of doctrines and abuses is not based on the conviction that they are Scriptural, but they are defended because they exist, and are held by the Romish church. Whether convinced of the truth of the doctrines of Rome or not, the Catholic theologians, as good Catholics, were obliged to defend them, because they were taught by the church. This accounts for the many irrelevant quotations, and gross perversions of Scripture, and for the frequent appeals to the fathers, the popes, the councils, and the general consent of the church. In the Confession there breathes the spirit of the new religious life, which God called into being, and which made a new era for the church; in the Confutation we see the dying scholasticism struggling for life. The Confession does not break with the entire past, rejecting the old because old. It is far removed from that fanatical and infidel spirit which destroys for the sake of destroying. It cherishes the past, and is anxious to retain all in it that is good. But at the same

time it wants to sift that past and reject its errors. And gladly does it accept new truths and blend them with those held in the past. We find in the Confession neither the spirit of the Anabaptists nor of the Papists, Its progress is conservative, and its conservatism is progressive. But the Confutation is conservative only. In this respect it is true to the genius of the papacy. The doctrines once decreed by the church, and the practices once introduced, must be right, for the church cannot err. It is therefore necessary to defend even the abuses that are practiced with the sanction of the church. For the acknowledgment that the church can make a mistake is an abandonment of the very essence of the papacy.





CHAPTER VII.

EARNEST EFFORTS TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT ON THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CONFESSION AND THE CONFUTATION.

WE have already seen that in the diet on the 5th of August, the emperor offered the confessors a copy of the Confutation with such conditions as to make it advisable for them not to accept it. They therefore declined the copy, stating that they would reply to the Confutation as best they could, and leave the whole matter to God and the emperor. This refusal to accept a copy created quite a storm. The Papists were amazed and indignant. The refusal of the emperor's offer was, they thought, an act of insubordination. It seemed to the most violent of the Papists that the time had now come to draw the sword at once. In the midst of the excitement and hot dispute, the archbishop of Mentz and his brother, the elector of Brandenburg, and Henry duke of Brunswick requested the Protestants to drop the matter for the present, lest the emperor should become still more excited, at the same time promising to use their influence to have the whole affair amicably settled.* This intervention resulted in the appointment of a committee to confer with the Protestants and to devise, if possible, means of agreement.†

There was sound policy in the efforts of the emperor to avoid the discussion of the religious questions before the diet, as was clearly proved on the 5th of August. If these questions could at all be disposed of, it must be done by committees who could act more deliberately. The diet con-

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 824 and 825.

† This committee consisted of 15 or 16 persons.

tained too many hot-heads to make calm discussion on the subject possible. But the prospect of agreement between committees was very dark. It was the last resort, and nothing was to be left untried. Even those who had thus far hoped that peace might yet be kept, now became very apprehensive. War seemed inevitable. Brentz thought that all things threatened the destruction of Germany.* The elector of Saxony was calm as usual; "The straightest road," he said, "is the best."

Melanchthon blamed the Protestant princes severely for not making more strenuous efforts to secure peace. They manifested an indifference and silent contempt† which displeased him; but he says confidently: "The whole matter is in God's hands and cannot be controlled by human diligence. Sometimes I think God withdraws human aid from us so that we may not rely on ourselves. Therefore pray thou earnestly, that God may keep us and preserve the peace. The landgrave acts very mildly and told me explicitly that for the sake of peace he would accept even very severe conditions which could be accepted without disgrace to the gospel."

But the landgrave with his apparent calmness was meditating, at the very time these words were written, an important step, which should give new cause for excitement and apprehension. He was tired of spending so much time and money in vain at Augsburg. He gave up all hopes of coming to an understanding with the Papists, whose conduct filled him with indignation. He asked permission of the emperor to go home, but his request was unheeded.‡ On the evening of the 6th of August, disguised, he secretly left the city with five or six horsemen, leaving, however, ambassadors at Augsburg. So secret were his movements that even the other confessors knew nothing of his intentions. For the elector of Saxony he left a letter, giving as his reason for leaving, the sickness of his wife, and exhorting him to be firm in defending God's word, at the

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 831 and 841.

† "Mira est negligentia, et, ut mihi videtur, tacita quædam indignatio." To Luther August 6th.

‡ Corp. Ref. II. No. 832.

same time promising that he would risk all for its defence. This course of Philip of Hesse greatly disturbed the emperor. Fearing lest the other Protestants might also leave, he had the gates doubly guarded by his own soldiers. This act so contrary to the usual course pursued at diets, and so threatening, was a source of much complaint on the part of the Protestants. The emperor, however, excused his conduct by stating that the guards had been stationed at the gates on account of a murder which had been committed in the city. The imperial guards were withdrawn, and the emperor promised not to place them there again without the knowledge of the elector of Saxony, grand marshal of the empire. The Protestants, on the other hand, promised not to leave the city without the consent of the emperor.

In and around Augsburg there was much excitement. The opposition to the Papists was very strong, as the suppression of God's word was supposed to be their mission. A general uprising was feared. The threats of the emperor only made matters worse. It was evident that blow would be met with blow. The Protestants were comparatively calm. It was the turn of the Papists to be disturbed. The bold manoeuvre of Philip changed the whole aspect of affairs. His plans were a mystery. His impetuosity and warlike spirit might lead him to gather an army at once and commence war before the diet closed its sessions. This the emperor and his party feared, and for it they were unprepared. The neighbors of the landgrave, who would have suffered most in the event of war, were most apprehensive. The Papists seemed suddenly to become conscious of the fact that their violent threats and unfair dealings might hasten on a war which would prove as disastrous to them as to their opponents. The tone of the emperor was at once changed. Instead of attempting to compel the confessors to accept the Confutation he now favored more peaceable counsel.

The papal committee appointed to confer with the Protestants, with a view of coming to some agreement, at its very first meeting was found to consist of very discordant elements. Some of the members were favorably disposed towards the Protestants, whilst others were very bitterly

opposed to them. The bishop of Augsburg exhorted the other members to be careful not to do anything contrary to God's word, for, he said, it is evident that the Lutherans reject no article of the Christian faith. He accordingly urged them to use the proper means for restoring peace and unity. To him the archbishop of Salzburg replied: "Whence comes this sudden change in you and this unexpected holiness? The fact that lately you used very different words in reference to this affair, is still fresh in my memory." "I do not deny," answered the bishop, "that in my time I have done much that is sinful, but the present time and occasion admonish me to renounce iniquity, and say good night to carnal lusts, and to begin a new life. And in order that I may hide nothing, I will state that your life is probably not much more pious than mine, but your intention is much worse than mine, since you seek to excuse your vices with more obstinacy, to palliate the idolatrous practices, and to defend, and retain abominable doctrines." The elector of Brandenburg espoused the cause of the archbishop and declared that it was not true that the Lutherans rejected no article of faith, and instanced the fact that the Protestants rejected the Romish view of the church and the worship of the saints. The bishop however argued that the worship of the saints was no doctrinal article, and that the Lutherans did not reject the doctrine respecting the Catholic church, but only attempted to reform the abuses of the Romish church, of which, undeniably, many dangerous ones were to be found. The elector of Mentz, weary of this contention, begged them to desist, and earnestly admonished them to consider the reform of the many abuses and the preservation of peace in the empire. The dispute in the committee was a hot one and lasted all day.* But the views most hostile to the Reformation prevailed, thus giving but little hope of agreement with the Lutherans.

The colloquies between this committee and the Protestants began the 7th of August. The first meeting was opened with an address by the elector of Brandenburg, who urged the Lutherans to consider that their views were evi-

* Seck. 1065--1066.

dently contrary to the Gospel, that to persist in them would be the occasion of much bloodshed and the destruction of souls; he exhorted them to renounce their doctrines, accept those of the church, and leave the reformation of abuses to the emperor and the pope.*

The Protestants in their reply refused to renounce their Confession unless convinced by Scripture that its teachings were false. Nevertheless they expressed their willingness to use all proper means to form an agreement, and an earnest desire to have the whole matter referred to a general council. They also complained that a copy of the Confutation had been withheld from them.

This reply of the Protestants was not only signed by the original confessors, but also by the count of Mansfeld and by the cities Kempten, Weinsheim, Heilbron and Weissenburg, so that the threats of the Papists had the effect of increasing the number of the confessors.

The Romish committee also wanted peace, but one which would destroy the Protestant faith. In their answer to the above they gave the true reason for withholding the Confutation. The emperor's former edicts, they said, had not only not been executed, but had even been ridiculed, despised and held in contempt, to the evident disgrace of his imperial majesty. If now the Confutation was made public, it would meet with the same fate, and would occasion much dispute, which was forbidden. They accused the Lutherans of having too much conscience where none was to be exercised, and none at all where it ought to be used, and argued that the holy Catholic Church ought to be more authority for their consciences than their preachers who had introduced many unchristian practices into the church and had led astray many of the common people.

On the 13th the Protestants gave their reply † which is

* At this meeting, as so often, a special effort was made to induce the elector of Saxony to renounce his faith. The elector of Brandenburg told him, that, unless he would renounce the new Lutheran doctrine, the emperor would use all his power to deprive him and his adherents of life, property, wife, children, and honor. Salig. I. 279. Seck. 1068.

† Chyträus 331.

by far the most important document that passed between them and the Catholic Committee. They claimed that it was not their fault that all efforts at reconciliation had proved useless, which was rather owing to the fact that their opponents, instead of fairly discussing the matter, were only intent on making them abandon their Confession without being properly refuted. Their noble words on their conscientiousness in the whole affair, were worthy of the men and their cause. "Although we acknowledge that we are human and are sinners, we should not knowingly like to act contrary to God's word in matters pertaining to God's honor and the holy Christian faith, nor should we like to burden our consciences by persecuting the truth. We therefore do not doubt that herein we have a more peaceful conscience than some who have persecuted this doctrine, have banished the preachers, and have not given place to this doctrine, because by them these matters were never heard and treated as they should have been. Our consciences do not rely on the persons of our preachers; but after we found that their doctrine was founded on God's word, we feared and still fear to fight against it, for we feel ourselves bound to give God's word the highest honor and to promote that word." They state that in their Confession they had omitted many abuses for the sake of peace and unity which they hoped to gain. Repeatedly they assert that they had no intention of separating from the holy Christian Church, and therefore again appeal to a general council. They were willing, however, still to continue the efforts to form an agreement, and proposed that of both parties, a few persons inclined to peace should be appointed to consider the matter in a friendly manner, since they perhaps could accomplish more than so many.

Thus far no serious effort had been made to harmonize the conflicting opinions. The Confutation was declared to be a complete refutation of the Confession, and therefore the confessors were requested to accept it. The first committee appointed to confer with the Lutherans simply renewed this request, without making an effort to discuss the different views. It was evident that, if an agreement could at all be formed, it must be by means of a compromise. Both parties must make some concessions. For this Melanch-

thon had long labored, He repeatedly wrote to Luther to know what concessions could be made to the Papists for the sake of peace. In his letters to the papal legate Campeggio he manifested great willingness to yield, if the Romish church would only allow them both the elements in the eucharist and the marriage of the priests. On the 4th of August he wrote a very humiliating letter.* He feeds the vanity of the legate. The letter is worthy only of Melancthon's fears, not at all of the great cause he represented. However much his aim may be approved, we must condemn the means used to attain it. We see here the great man stooping to an inferior who happened to be favored with a higher ecclesiastical position. It is truth and right begging of error and knavery the privilege of existing. He thinks the church can allow both the elements, since those who differ from the Protestants in this respect are not condemned; but it is taught by the Protestants, Melancthon continues, that under each element the whole Christ is present. The Romish church can allow the marriage of priests and monks by dispensing with the vows, and thus make an end of the scandal of concubinage. In the mass, he says, the essential ceremonies are retained. The Protestants are ready to obey the bishops; the rest can be arranged without difficulty. If the desired end is gained, pains will be taken that the pope shall not regret his kindness.

As the Papists insisted chiefly on the retention of the abuses, it was thought that on the doctrinal articles an agreement would be more easy, especially as the confessors claimed to hold no article in conflict with the Scriptures, the councils, or the fathers.† Plans for the adjustment of the differences respecting the abuses were drawn up by Melancthon. In these, as in his letters to Campeggio, he was specially anxious to secure the cup for the laity, and the marriage of the priests. Even if they desired to restore all things as they had been, he thought it would be im-

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 820; also No. 819.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 837b. "Zudem haben wir in unser Bekanntniss angezeigt, dass wir keinen Artikel des Glaubens halten, oder zu lehren gestattet haben, der heiliger Schrift oder den Concilien und Vatern entgegen seyn sollt."

possible. If these two points were gained, then some arrangement could easily be made with the Papists till a council was assembled.*

The proposal of the Protestants, to appoint on each side some men peaceably inclined, who should continue the peace-conferences, was accepted by the Catholic committee. Seven were appointed on each side, two princes, two lawyers, and three theologians.† Eck wanted no princes on the committee, because he thought they were nothing but fools. Of the Catholic committee all were inclined to peace except the theologians.

Melanchthon's hopes, that peace would yet be attained, revived with the appointment of these committees.‡ He was especially rejoiced to find on the Catholic committee a man so favorably disposed towards the Protestants as the bishop of Augsburg, and on the very day when the committee was appointed, August 13th, he wrote him a friendly letter, encouraging him to use his influence for the restoration of harmony.§

The Catholics requested Dr. Eck to prepare articles showing wherein the Confession differed from the Catholic faith, and to propose means of agreement on disputed points. In substance the document prepared by him was the same as the Confutation, though much shorter. The subjects on

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 835. "Concilium Mel. de concordia facienda."

† The Catholic committee consisted of the bishops of Augsburg and Henry duke of Brunswick; Bernhard Hagen and Jerome Vehus, chancellors of the archbishops of Cologne and Baden; and Drs. Eck, Wimpina, and Cochläus. The duke of Brunswick was however soon sent by the emperor to watch the movements of Philip of Hesse, and his place was taken by George duke of Saxony. On the Protestant committee were, John Frederick, prince electoral, and margrave George of Brandenburg; Bruck and Heller, chancellors of the elector of Saxony and of the margrave of Brandenburg; Melanchthon, Schnepf, and Brentz.

‡ Letter to Camerarius, Corp. Ref. No. 839.

§ Brentz had no hope of concord. To Isenmann he wrote, August 14th, Corp. Ref. II. No. 841: "One hopes this, another fears that. I expect no favorable result from this diet, since the affairs are conducted with so much cunning and violence. The destruction of Germany is at hand, unless God from on high takes care of our affairs."

which agreement would be most difficult, if not impossible, were, in his opinion, the cup for the laity, marriage of the priests and monks, private mass, and the traditions.*

The Protestant theologians also prepared a memorial for the Protestant princes on the means of securing peace.† The princes are urged therein to use all possible means, consistent with Scripture, to secure peace, so as to avoid personal loss and the destruction of land and people. The continuance of unnecessary schism cannot be justified before God. "Therefore we pray, that the princes may, for the sake of God and themselves, be diligent in promoting peace. And though it is to be feared that our adversaries are too severe, and will yield in nothing, nevertheless our consciences are more secure, and our reputation before the world will be greater, if the fault is not ours. . . . In such an affair it is necessary that we should also yield something to our opponents, as much as can conscientiously be done." Articles that must not be yielded are those referring to faith, good works, Christian freedom, both elements, private mass, and marriage. On the other hand, concessions may be made respecting external ceremonies in worship, though the German hymns must not be prohibited; the jurisdiction is to be restored to the bishops, though they are not to persecute the Gospel.

The preliminaries having been arranged, peace-conferences commenced in earnest the 16th of August and continued till the 21st. It was agreed that the discussions should be conducted in a friendly manner. Nothing was to be finally settled, but the result of the conferences was to be submitted to the diet, which must give the final decision. The Confutation was not at all used in the discussions, but only the Confession, which was taken up article by article.‡ In the discussion of the doctrinal articles the Papists were very mild. On some articles they agreed at once, those namely which the Confutation recognized as Catholic; on others

* Appendix E.

† Corps. Rep. No. 844. It is probable that this memorial was prepared by Melancthon.

‡ The reports on the discussions of these committees are found in Foerstemann II. 219-274. Chytræus 174. Seck. 1076-1080.

the parties persuaded themselves that they agreed, though the agreement was more imaginary than real; but there were some doctrines on which no agreement could be made.* The greatest discussion on the doctrinal articles occurred on the article respecting Justification. Dr. Eck did not like the Protestant doctrine that faith alone justifies.† Dr. Eck thought that faith and love justify, and love more than faith. To Luther Melanchthon wrote: "Eck cavils about the word alone (*sola*), when we say that men are justified by faith alone. . . He desired that we should write that we are justified by grace and faith; this I did not object to, but he is so foolish, that he does not understand the word grace."

The Protestants finally consented to drop the word "alone" (*sola*), by the use of which word they did not intend to exclude grace and the sacraments, but only works; and it was agreed that "justification or pardon is effected through grace, and through faith in us, and through the word and sacraments as means." But it must not be supposed that by using these words either party gave up their distinctive views.

Whilst it was acknowledged by both parties that good works must be done, they could not agree as to whether they were meritorious. There was consequently no agreement on the 20th article.

Whilst the Protestants acknowledged that the saints
 21 should be held in honorable remembrance, they were unwilling to acknowledge that they ought to be worshiped, since there is nothing in Scripture to justify such worship. On the doctrine of repentance there was no agreement.

The doctrine of baptism and the Lord's Supper, as stated in the Confession, was accepted by the Catholics; though they wanted the word "realiter" or "substantialiter" added to the 10th article in Latin, and the word "wesentlich" in the German, so as to teach that Christ's body and blood are "essentially" present under the form of bread and wine.

* At the first colloquy it was found that the Papists accepted all the articles of the Confession except those that treated of original sin, faith and good works, the church, confession, and the worship of saints. Planck III. p. 104

† Fides sola justificat. Eck wanted the word "*sola*" erased. Förstemann II. 224-227.

But by far the most difficult task was an agreement on the second part of the Confession, the abuses, to which the Papists clung so tenaciously. In order to avoid violent disputes it was concluded to conduct the discussions on these articles in writing. On these, however, agreement was impossible. The Papists were willing that both parties should celebrate the Lord's Supper as they thought right, but that neither party should teach that the use either of one only, or of both elements, was commanded in Scripture. Thus matters were to stand until a council decided the question. Melancthon wrote to Luther August 22nd, of Dr. Eck: "He labored hard to prove that there is no command to use both elements; he regards it as a matter of indifference whether the communicant receives one or both elements, and if we would teach this he is very willing that we should have both elements. I could not agree to this, though I excused those who heretofore from ignorance received but one of the elements."

On the mass, the marriage of priests, and vows there was no agreement. The Protestants offered to restore to the bishops their authority and jurisdiction, but wanted them to act in accordance with God's word in the discharge of the duties of their office. Even the pope was to be recognized, not indeed as instituted by divine, but by human authority. They said: "Even if he is Antichrist, we can nevertheless live under him as formerly the Jews did under Pharaoh and Caiaphas."*

In spite of the concessions made, and the apparent agreement on some articles, an entire agreement was out of the question. On the 21st of August the conferences closed, and a report of the result was submitted to the diet.

Thus ended the first efforts at compromise, without any definite result. "I know not," wrote Melancthon to Lu-

*Bruck was opposed to the recognition of the pope as a ruler even by human authority. On the margin of the document presented by the theologians, which is supposed to have been written by Melancthon, in which submission to the authority of the bishops and the pope was recommended, Bruck wrote as follows: "We cannot recognize the dominion of the pope since he claims to rule by divine authority, and is regarded as the Antichrist, whom Paul predicted and who has now been revealed." Seck. 1072.

ther, "how the matter will end; for although our adversaries also need peace, nevertheless they do not seem to consider how great the danger would be if war were to break out."

The discussions were generally conducted by Eck and Melanchthon, though sometimes the others also took part. The proceedings were mostly characterized by moderation, though at times Eck and Melanchthon would become excited, when the princes would interpose and exhort to mildness.* Melanchthon, however, regarded the discussions as real contentions rather than friendly colloquies.†

Thus far all efforts at agreement had failed. The committees could not even agree what course should be pursued by both parties till a council should decide the whole matter. Even the language on disputed articles, which was adopted by both parties as a compromise, was differently interpreted by them, and in reality they were as far apart as ever. But on the nature of repentance (article 12), on faith and good works (article 20), and on the worship of saints (article 21), as well as on the second part of the Confession, not even an apparent agreement was possible.

What was now to be done? The indifference of the Protestant princes respecting an agreement with the Papists, of which Melanchthon repeatedly complained, seems to have been removed. They were now desirous to come to an agreement. "We find," say the delegates from Nuremberg,‡ "that at least the elector of Saxony and the margrave would like to come to terms and form an agreement with their opponents. What has brought about this desire we know not. God grant his grace that they may have a good conscience in the matter."

The supposed agreement on some points excited the hope that on the rest some understanding might also be arrived at. The failure of the committees of seven was attributed chiefly to the obstinacy of George, duke of Saxony. For the purpose of getting rid of him, the Catholics proposed

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 846.

† To Luther August 22nd. Corp. Ref. II. No. 854.

‡ Corp. Ref. II. No. 855—their report is dated August 23rd.

that still smaller committees be appointed.* To this the Protestants agreed. Three were appointed on each side, two lawyers and one theologian; the princes were excluded. The Catholics appointed the chancellors Hagen and Vehus, and Dr. Eck; the Protestants, the chancellors Bruck and Heller, and Melanchthon. On the 24th of August, the colloquies commenced, and continued four days. Dr. Eck wanted to take up the three doctrinal articles first, on which no agreement was possible by the former committees (articles 12, 20, and 21, of the Confession). He thought the differences were more verbal than real. It was thought by Vehus that if unity in doctrine was once attained, the other subjects might be left undecided till the meeting of a general council. But the very same difficulties met by the preceding committees, were again found to be in the way. The disputes on both the elements, celibacy, and private mass, were as fruitless as before. Neither party seemed inclined to make any more concessions. Even Eck now seemed to be anxious for an agreement and addressed a letter to Melanchthon urging him to use his influence to restore harmony and unity.† But all efforts were vain. The 26th of August Melanchthon wrote to Luther: "I cannot write anything either respecting public or private matters, for we have already for many consecutive days attempted to come to an agreement, but we accomplish nothing. They insist on private mass, and make propositions respecting other affairs, which it is advisable not to accept. . . . In the meanwhile they use the most fearful threats; although I care nothing about the danger in which I am placed, nevertheless I am often apprehensive on account of the great weakness of our princes." The 1st September, he writes: "Three days ago our colloquy was closed. For we refuse to accept the conditions of one part in the Lord's supper, of the canon, of private mass, and of celibacy. The matter has again been submitted to the emperor, and I am not able to imagine what the result will be. Let us beseech Christ that he may guide the emperor's mind to pre-

* Förstemann, II. 290. Corp. Ref. II. No. 855. The Lutherans at first objected to the appointment, because they had already made all possible concessions.

† August 27th. Corp. Ref. II. No. 865.

serve the peace, which is now so necessary, not for us only, but for the whole of Germany."

It seemed, in fact, as if the discussions only made it more evident that the differences were really irreconcilable; and when the debates were ended the committees found themselves further apart than they supposed they were before the colloquies commenced.

The Protestant committee were willing to abide by the concessions that the former Protestant committee had proposed, until a general council could be convened. The Catholics promised that a council should be assembled, but they wanted the Lutherans, till the council met, to restore every thing as it had been before the Reformation. This would have been a complete abandonment of their position, which they of course refused to do. Had they restored the old order of things, Rome would have been satisfied and would in all probability have postponed indefinitely the convocation of a council. It would have been an easy way of destroying the Reformation.

The colloquies proved conclusively that the Papists held so tenaciously to the abuses that there was but little hope that an effort would be made to reform them. The Catholics conducted themselves in the conferences just as at the meetings of the diet—they treated the Lutherans as if they were on trial, as those who were already condemned, and who, to be pardoned, must confess their guilt, repent of the same, and return to the church of Rome in doctrine and in practice. Some have thought that the Papists were not sincere in their apparent efforts to harmonize the doctrines; that they only wanted to make a show of fairness; or that they wanted to weary and worry the Protestants so as to induce them to make all possible concessions. There is no doubt, however, that they wanted and needed peace as well as the Lutherans; but they wanted it on their own conditions.

After the Papists had induced their opponents to make as many concessions as possible, they gloried in the fact. They boasted that they had made them abandon some doctrines they had formerly taught. "They seize hold of such arguments as are of no use for piety," wrote Melancthon,*

* To Luther, August 25th.

"but which serve chiefly to excite the hatred of others against us; and our moderation in such matters serves to augment the fierceness of the insolent men. It cannot be described what triumphs they celebrate here. If I attended to this affair in my own name, not in that of the princes, I would by no means bear this insolence."

When Eck found that all efforts to bring the Protestants back to the church of Rome failed, he regretted that the attempt had at all been made to win them back peaceably. "'The emperor acted imprudently,' he said, 'because he did not immediately on entering Germany search out the Lutherans in every city. If he had done this, he would have heard the most impudent replies and also many monstrous heresies. These would have inflamed the emperor so as to lead him to destroy the entire sect. Now he has become more mild, after he has postponed the investigation and has heard the matter in the diet, where Bruck's fair words and my (Melanchthon's) mildness have accomplished so much, that he is no longer so bitter as the cause demands.' This he said yesterday in a playful manner. But you see that neither judgment nor prudence is wanting in our enemies."*

Eck was more in earnest than his manner indicated. The specious reasons for holding the colloquies were proved by the result to be untenable. The parties were not fully conscious of the radical difference between the two systems of doctrines. Agreeing on many of the great fundamental articles of religion, it was thought that on others the difference was more seeming and verbal than real. They thought that if the terms were explained in friendly colloquies, and if they really understood each other, it might be found that they were substantially agreed, and that their differences were only superficial. In the meetings of the committees this view was fully exploded. Both parties were made fully conscious of the fact, that the differences between them were radical; that the dispute was not about words merely, but about ideas, about things. And after all explanations were given, and after the parties fully understood each other, they were as far apart as before, and were more convinced of the fact. By means of the discus-

* Melanchthon to Luther, August 81st.

sions the differences were generalized and were reduced to a few points; could they have agreed on these points, then harmony would have been possible; but these few points were great principles on which whole systems of doctrine and practice depended.

The fact that they were not fully conscious of the radical difference between the two systems, led to another error. It was supposed that harmony could be attained by compromise. If both parties would make some concessions on non-fundamentals, then, it was thought, they might still be one. Melancthon, in particular, based great hopes on these concessions. And his complaint was, that their opponents would make but few concessions, whilst he was willing to make many for the sake of peace. The wily Papists, understanding Melancthon's weakness, drew from him all the concessions they possibly could, whilst they in turn only pretended to yield. They were very much in favor of concessions, but they were all to be made by the other party. At last the Protestants became frightened at their own concessions, all of which had been in vain, and which even became a reproach to them. They served only to prove how intense and sincere was their desire for peace. But when it was found that the differences were so radical that there was no hope of agreement, unless the one or the other party entirely abandoned its principles, then there was an end to compromise; the Protestants declared that they could yield no more, and that they could only consent to more colloquies if other conditions of peace were proposed than those which demanded more concessions of them; and then the colloquies terminated.

When agreement was found to be impossible, one hope was still cherished—that the differences between the two parties might be tolerated until a council should meet and decide the whole matter. Until that time the Protestant committee of three was willing that the concessions they had offered should be binding on them. But the principles of the two parties were found to be, not only radically different, but also antagonistic. They could not exist together, but constantly tended to destroy each other. This Rome knew full well. Toleration to it was suicide. Its ultimate condition of peace and its condition for convening a council,

was, therefore, the return of the Protestants to the doctrines and practices of the Romish church. However much we may blame the spirit of the papacy, we cannot charge it with inconsistency. It was consistently intolerant.

We must thus attribute the failure of the colloquies to the radical difference between the Papacy and Protestantism. And we rejoice in this failure, because the end aimed at could have been attained only by ignoring this difference. All explanations of the words faith, and good works; the willingness of the Protestants to drop the word sola; the acknowledgment of the Papists that works are not of themselves meritorious, but only through the grace of God, did not make the Romish and Protestant doctrines on faith and works the same. Explanations, compromises, concessions were useless. The agreement on some points was only apparent. Lasting harmony could only have been expected if one party had been convinced of its error and, abandoning it, had adopted the doctrines of the other party. As this was, however, out of the question, the colloquies failed and ought to have failed. But they brought out the differences of the two parties in a more striking light; the parties learned to know each other better, and they became more fully convinced, that they could not walk together because they were not agreed.

The institution of the colloquies was just what Melancthon wanted. As the spokesman of the Protestant committees, he now had an opportunity of making the concessions which he had already offered to the papal legate. The result sadly disappointed him. He had hoped that Rome would yield something at least; but the hierarchy was inflexible, and demanded unconditional submission. And during the colloquies the same system of moving the confessors by promises and threats, which had so often been tried, was continued.

Melancthon's position was a very unfortunate one. He tried to act the part of mediator between the two parties, and very naturally pleased neither. The concessions he offered to make, even if they had been accepted by the committees, would not have been final; the confessors themselves might oppose them, or the diet might reject them as the conditions of peace. But these very concessions to the

Papists made him odious to men of both parties. Some of the enemies of the Reformation looked with a degree of contempt on what they regarded as slyness and flexibility. His fears and anxieties they used for their own purposes.* And when he would not yield all they wanted, they blamed his stubbornness for the failure of the colloquies. By some of the Protestants he was severely blamed, who looked on him as greatly injuring and disgracing the cause of the Reformation, if not virtually abandoning it. "We are severely blamed," he writes to Luther, August 29th, "by our party for restoring to the bishops their authority. For the people who have become accustomed to freedom and have once cast off the yoke of the bishops, are reluctant to bear the old yoke again. The free cities especially hate the rule of the bishops. About the doctrine of religion they care nothing; they are solicitous only about the government and freedom." But in spite of these attacks he thinks that even harder conditions ought to be accepted by them, if thus peace could be secured.† September 1st he writes to Luther: "You cannot believe how odious I am to the Nurembergers ‡ and I know not what others, on ac-

* The Papists hoped that they would be able to win him over to their side. In Italy the report was spread that he had knelt before the papal legate and had subjected himself and all he had to the legate and the pope—a report which probably had its origin in the fact that Melanchthon wrote to Campeggio as a suppliant, July 6th: "Why is it necessary to persecute us suppliants with fire and sword?" His letters to the legate were circulated among the Papists to his injury. Indeed, it was thought by Camerarius, his intimate friend, that some of the colloquies were held for the special purpose of bringing him on the side of the Papists. Seck. 1086, 1087.

† To Veit Diedrich, August 29th, Corp. Ref. II. No. 873.

‡ The city of Nuremberg sent a memorial to Augsburg in which they complained very much of the concessions made to the Papists. These, they thought, were such as to destroy in the most subtle manner the Gospel. The simple restoration of the authority to the bishops, they thought, if accepted by the Catholics, even if all other matters were left for a council to decide, would effectually destroy the Reformation. They wanted the Protestants at Augsburg to take a more noble and decided stand for the truth, and wanted the articles on the concessions sent to Luther, who would undoubtedly oppose all that was done contrary to God's word. And the professed concessions ought, they thought, to be declared null and void. Seck. 1084, 1085.

count of the restoration of the jurisdiction to the bishops. Thus our party contends only for dominion, not for the Gospel. Baumgartner wrote to me, that if I had been bribed by the pope with as much money as I could desire, no better way could have been devised for restoring the papal dominion than men thought that dominion to be which we have restored. Thus far I have let no doctrinal article fall."

Philip of Hesse saw in the course of the Papists at Augsburg nothing but knavery and deceit. To the concessions made by the Protestant committees he was decidedly opposed. The more they yielded, he thought, the more their opponents would want them to yield. He requested his delegates at Augsburg to inform the confessors that he would not adopt those concessions as conditions of peace. Some minor points he was willing to concede to the Catholics, if they would allow the preaching of the Gospel, the marriage of the priests, and both the elements; otherwise not a hair's breadth was to be yielded. To yield on other conditions, he thinks, would destroy, not promote the Gospel. "This is no time to yield, but to stand for the truth even unto death." To restore the jurisdiction to the bishops, who in doctrine and life were like Caiaphas, Annas, and Pilate, was mere mockery. "Communicate these views of mine to the representatives of the cities, and tell them to be men, not women. All is well; God is on our side. Let him who likes to fear, be afraid. . . . Destroy the calculations of the prudent, philosophic, timorous Philip."* To Luther he wrote: "Melanchthon's pusillanimity is alone to blame for the strange proceedings at the diet." To Zwingli he wrote: "Master Philip goes backward like a crawfish."

Had the concessions of Melanchthon prevailed, the cause of the Reformation would have been greatly injured. Among the friends of the gospel there was consequently great dissatisfaction on account of the proposed concessions. From all quarters letters came to Melanchthon, exhorting him not to abandon or disgrace the truth. There is, however, no doubt that he was too severely censured by some. They

* Letters to his delegates at Augsburg, August 29th. Corp. Ref. II. No. 870, 871.

did not fully understand the nature of the concessions and the conditions under which they were made. He thought that if the gospel was only preached the progress of the truth would be such as to remove the remaining errors and abuses. He did not want to give up any doctrinal articles, but was willing to yield on matters which seemed to him of secondary importance. And this he did, not for his safety, but because he thought the welfare of the church at large demanded it. To a friend in Reutlingen he wrote: * "I know that our moderation will be censured by the people; but we ought not to heed the cry of the masses. We must have regard to peace and to posterity. If harmony can be restored to Germany, it will be a blessing to all. What a condition of things we should transmit to posterity if the power of the bishops should be destroyed. The laity do not trouble themselves about ecclesiastical jurisdiction and similar matters. Besides this, too great difference in the churches is injurious to peace. We therefore think it advantageous in some way or other to agree with the bishops lest we should be perpetually burdened with the disgrace of a schism." From this and other letters it is evident that Melancthon thought the restoration of authority to the bishops necessary for the preservation of order in the churches.

When Luther learned that colloquies were to be instituted he sent a memorial to Augsburg, giving his views on the subject.† He says: "If our opponents will yield in nothing, but continue to condemn us in all respects as heretofore, and if no one is willing to accept our great offers so often made to them, then we do not see how it is possible to commence any colloquies with them. For we cannot enter into colloquy with them on the condition that they shall retain everything as it is, while our cause is to be condemned, which has heretofore been too much the case." He then proceeds to give his views as to the concessions that might be made. In doctrine nothing could be yielded. The cup must not be withheld from our laity, although the Christians who use but one of the elements are not to be

* Matthew Alberus, August 23rd. Corp. Ref. II. No. 856.

† Seck. 1110, 1111.

condemned. Marriage must be free to all. Private mass must not be restored. Neither is the authority to be restored to the bishops, if the Papists will make no concessions; if, however, they will tolerate the faith of the Protestants, then their authority might again be recognized.

Luther was well aware that the doctrinal differences of the two systems were so radical that no agreement was possible, and he hoped that Melanchthon's experience at Augsburg would convince him of this fact.* He would rather, he says, give his life than yield a hair's breadth in doctrine. To Melanchthon's great concessions to their adversaries he was decidedly opposed. He wants the colloquies to cease, urges the Protestants to go home; they have done their duty, let them leave the result with God. "You write," he says to Melanchthon,† "that you have promised to restore obedience, the jurisdiction to the bishops, and the common ceremonies. Be careful, however, not to give more than you possess, lest we be obliged again to wage a more difficult and dangerous war to retain the Gospel. I am well aware that you always except the Gospel in such contracts; but I fear that afterwards they will charge us with being treacherous or fickle, if we do not do just what they want. For they will stretch our concessions to the utmost, whilst they will contract their own as much as possible. To sum up the whole matter: I do not at all like the manoeuvring for the purpose of restoring harmony of doctrine, for this is utterly impossible, unless the pope will give up the papacy. It would have been enough to have given the reason for our faith, and to have asked peace. How can we hope to convert them to the truth? We come to learn whether our doctrine pleased them or not, leaving them the privilege of remaining what they are. And we ask, whether they condemn, or approve the doctrine? If they condemn it, what is the use of desiring to confer with our enemies about harmony? If they approve it, why is it necessary to retain the old abuses? Since, however, it is certain that they condemn our faith, since they do not want to repent, and want to retain their faith, why is it that we do not

* Letter to Melanchthon July 18th

† August 26th.

perceive that all they do is mere pretence and deception?"

He deprecates the efforts commenced at Augsburg to harmonize the pope and Luther,* and promises, if they succeed, to conciliate Christ and Belial. His letters to Augsburg written in August and September are full of warning not to concede too much to their enemies. He was beset by the Nurembergers and others to oppose the concessions of his Augsburg friends. The conditions of peace proposed by the committees he would not accept even if an angel from heaven were to announce them.† "I almost burst with wrath and indignation," he continues. "I pray you, desist conferring with them, and go home. They have the Confession, they have the Gospel; if they desire these let them accept them; if they refuse them, then let them go. If war is the result, then let it come; we have begged and done enough. The Lord has prepared them for the slaughter that he may render to them according to their works."

However severely Luther at times reproved Melanchthon for his lack of faith and for his undue concessions, he by no means joined in the general clamor against his friend. He defended him against the attacks of others,‡ and tried to cheer him while so violently assailed. "I beseech you, my Philip," he writes, "not to trouble yourself about the reports of those who declare that you have conceded too much to the Papists. . . . They do not understand the jurisdiction restored to the bishops, nor take into account the conditions connected with it. Would that the bishops had accepted it with these conditions."§ September 15th he wrote to the same: "You have confessed Christ, have offered peace, have obliged the emperor, have borne injuries, slanders are heaped upon you; neither have you returned evil for evil. You have worthily performed God's holy work as it becomes the pious. Therefore rejoice in the

* To Spalatin, August 26th.

† Letter to Jonas, September 20th.

‡ Luther's Letters to Spengler August 25th, to Link September 20th.

§ The conditions of which Luther speaks were, that the bishops should exercise their authority in a Christian manner, and should not oppose the preaching of the gospel.

Lord and exult ye righteous; you have been sad long enough in the world. Raise your head and look up, your redemption approaches. I will canonize you as faithful members of Christ; what greater honor can you wish?"

Had a disgraceful peace been made, there is no doubt that Luther would have opposed it with all his might, and Protestant Germany would have been with him. The hopes of the evangelical party were centered in him. And though he was not present at Augsburg, those who feared that too much might there be yielded to the Papists, turned to Luther, being well aware that he would submit to nothing that would injure their cause.





CHAPTER VIII.

THE RECESS, AND THE CLOSE OF THE DIET.

WHAT next? This was the question which greatly troubled both the Papists and the Protestants in the beginning of September. The colloquies were ended, and the religious questions were as complicated as ever. The Protestant princes, weary of their long stay at Augsburg, indignant at the course of their adversaries, and hopeless of attaining any favorable results, asked permission to leave. The emperor at first answered rudely, but probably remembering the departure of Philip of Hesse, he changed his tone and kindly requested them to remain, promising still to use his efforts to have the matter amicably settled.*

Some of the Protestants who were greatly dissatisfied with the result of the colloquies, were opposed to any more efforts to compromise the matter. Efforts were, however, still made by individuals of both parties to come to an agreement. An appeal was again made to Melancthon's fears. A friend of the chancellor of the bishop of Liege wrote him several letters, September 4th and 5th, in the former of which he says: "I do not know whether I dare mention it; the sword is already in the emperor's hand, and there are some who daily excite him more and more; he is not easily irritated, but when once angry, it is very difficult to pacify him.†" An invitation was extended to Melancthon to confer privately with the chancellor of the bishop; he did not however consent to this, but sent the chancellor

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 883.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 886.

his views of the articles on which thus far no agreement had been found possible.* But disinclined as the Protestants were to make any more concessions, the question was again seriously considered whether private mass might not be tolerated by them.†

On the 7th of September the Protestant princes and delegates were summoned to appear before the emperor, who announced to them through palsgrave Frederick his disappointment at finding that all efforts to form an agreement proved unavailing. He did not expect, he told them, that they, so few in number, would introduce doctrines and practices contrary to the entire Christian Church, the pope, the emperor, all kings, and their own ancestors. In order that his mildness and kindness to them might be made manifest he promised to use his influence to have a general council convened, but until that time they were to return to the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome.‡

In their reply the confessors affirmed that they had not founded a new sect, nor had they left the Christian church. They thanked the emperor for his willingness to convene a council, but at the same time declared that they could not conscientiously comply with the conditions he made.

After consulting with his party the emperor replied through George Truchsess, that he had found that they had departed far from the Christian church in many respects, and that he was greatly surprised that the Catholic committees had offered such favorable conditions, which the Protestants had refused. He thought the minority ought

*Corp. Ref. II. No. 887, 888. Förstemann II. 380.

†Corp. Ref. II. No. 891. Förstemann 385.

‡Förstemann II. 392. The 8th of September Melancthon wrote to Luther (Corp. Ref. No. 892): "Yesterday evening the princes were in the palace of the emperor till half-past eight and received this reply: The emperor is willing to have a council convened, but according to the ancient usage of the Church of Rome, and perhaps outside of Germany on account of the emperor's affairs. In the meanwhile everything is to be restored to the Papists, though this has not yet been finally decreed. If we had anything more to propose respecting controverted points, the emperor was willing to wait eight days to hear the matter. Concerning this matter our princes will thank the emperor to-day and say that they can make no more concessions."

to follow the majority.* He asked them whether they were willing still to consider means for the restoration of harmony? if not, he would be obliged to act in a manner becoming the protector of the church. As it was already late, they were to give their answer the next day.

With the emperor's permission the time for presenting a reply to this was extended to the 9th. Bruck then replied, that as all efforts to come to an agreement had failed, and as they had already made all possible concessions, it would be useless to make any more efforts. Till a council was convened they promised to act in a manner which they hoped to be able to justify before God and the emperor.†

The firmness of the Protestants, which he regarded as obstinacy, greatly displeased the emperor. Promises and threats were again resorted to, but with the same effect as before. His anger, and the dangers of war, were again used to move the Lutherans to make more concessions. New efforts were made to promote peace. Duke Henry of Brunswick conferred with the electoral prince of Saxony on the subject. The Papists were anxious to have the revenues and the entire control of the cloisters in the Protestant countries. Some of the Lutherans, who wanted to avoid the appearance of favoring the Reformation from worldly motives, were willing to restore them to the Catholics until a council could be convened; others opposed this, dreading the renewal of all the abominations connected with the cloisters. The prince electoral left Augsburg the 12th of September, but the negotiations were continued with Bruck. The chancellor of Baden and George Truchsess also made various propositions to Bruck and Melancthon, with whom they conferred in St. Maurice church. Truchsess also made propositions to the marquis of Brandenburg. From the 10th to the 21st of September these efforts were continued. But the same difficulties were found in the way, which had prevented an agreement on the part of the committees. Various propositions were made by Vehus and Truchsess, which, if accepted, would secure peace to the Protestants

* "Das billig der geringer hauff dem grossern nachvolgt." Förstemann II. 396.

† Förstemann II. 410.

till the assembling of a council. The Lutheran princes requested the views of their counselors and theologians, and numerous memorials were presented by them on the subject.* But all these efforts of the Catholics were based on the supposition that the Protestants would make still more concessions, which they refused to do, for which reason these efforts failed, as all preceding attempts to come to an agreement had done.

The emperor's final decision of the whole matter was expected in the early part of September. But it was postponed from day to day, probably with the hope that an agreement could yet be made. The patience of the elector of Saxony had been tried to the utmost. He determined to leave in secret, as Philip had done, and had already fixed on the 18th of September for his departure. Ernest duke of Luneburg had decided to accompany him, and informed the deputies of the cities to that effect, assuring them that, though he desired peace, he would willingly lose everything to defend the cause of the Gospel.† The emperor, however, heard of the elector's intention, and sent the duke of Brunswick to persuade him to remain. The next day he expected to receive permission from the emperor to depart, sent off his effects and cooks, and had all things prepared to leave Augsburg at 10 in the morning. But the emperor requested him to remain two, four, or six days longer. The elector was disappointed and indignant. The delay seemed useless, no favorable result would be attained, it looked as if he was imprisoned at Augsburg. He was determined to go, come what might. The efforts of his friends to change this resolution were vain. But after consulting with the emperor for the third time on the subject he agreed to remain till Friday the 23d, and, whether the emperor's final decision was given or not, he was then to be at liberty to depart without further delay.

The Catholic party were now engaged in preparing the recess of the diet (Reichsabschied). Its publication was anxiously looked for by the Protestants.‡ A favorable

* Förstemann II. 416-434, 455-472.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 905.

‡ Brentz wrote (Corp. Ref. II. No. 910): "The emperor is deliberating whether to hang us or still let us live."

decision was not expected by them. The delay of the emperor in publishing the recess showed his indecision. He and his party were much perplexed, not knowing what to do. War seemed inevitable, and yet both parties wanted to avoid war, except some of the extremists on the papal side.

The Protestant princes and states were summoned to appear before the emperor the 22nd of September, at 4 P. M., to hear the recess. Palsgrave Frederick addressed the diet, stating that the emperor was desirous of promoting peace, with which object in view the recess had been prepared, which it was hoped all would accept. The recess was then read by George Truchsess. It opened with a quotation from the emperor's proclamation, giving as one of the aims of the diet the restoration of harmony and unity to the Christian church. The Confession is then declared to have been refuted from Scripture. On some disputed points it was declared that an agreement had been made, but that on others no agreement had been possible. The adherents of the Confession* were to have time till the 15th of April to decide, whether they would agree with the emperor and other princes and members of the Catholic church, or not, till a council could be convened, during which time the emperor would also consider the course to be pursued by him. They were to prohibit in their countries and cities the publication and sale of anything new in matters of faith. They were not to draw and "force" any more persons to join their sect, as they had hitherto done, nor were they to interfere with those who retained their old faith, nor to introduce any more novelties. They were not to separate themselves from the emperor and the other princes, but were to unite with them in suppressing the Sacramentarians (Zwinglians) and the Anabaptists. Since there had been no council for many years, and as many abuses were prevalent, which needed reformation, the emperor promised to use his influence with the pope and other

* These are given as the elector of Saxony, the margrave of Brandenburg, the brothers Ernest and Francis dukes of Luneburg, Philip of Hesse, Wolfgang of Anhalt, and the cities Nuremberg, Reutlingen, Kempten, Heilbron, Windsheim and Weissenburg.

Christian powers, to have a proclamation for the convening of a council issued six months after the close of the diet, and to have the council itself held within a year after the issue of the proclamation.*

The Papists, regarding this recess as the best solution of the affair for the present, were very anxious to have the confessors accept it. Before it was read to them Truchsess and Vehus privately handed them a note assuring them, that if they would accept the recess, the time for considering the matter would undoubtedly be extended beyond the 15th of April, if they desired it. The recess itself was such as to make them indignant, but this effort to make them accept it increased their indignation.

That the Confession had been refuted in the Confutation had repeatedly been officially declared in the diet, for which reason the confessors were asked to renounce it. They indeed claimed that their Confession had not been refuted; but to this no attention was paid. If they left the boast of their adversaries unanswered, it might prove very prejudicial to their cause. The emperor requested them not to answer the Confutation, as he wanted it to be the end of controversy. Nevertheless, the confessors thought it best to prepare a reply. The doctrines of the Confession would thereby be strengthened; the assertion that it had been properly refuted, would be proved false; and the injustice of the demand to renounce it, based on this assertion, would be shown. Had an agreement been possible, a reply to the Confutation would not have been necessary. But when it became more and more evident that this was hopeless, Melancthon and other theologians were requested to prepare an Apology, which was to be a defence of the Confession and a refutation of the Confutation, in which "reasons might be given to his imperial majesty why we cannot accept the Confutation, and why the same is not well established."† A reply to the Confutation was probably meditated on immediately

* The Recess is given by Foerstemann, II. 474-478.

† Preface to the apology: "*Jusserant autem me et alios quosdam apologiam confessionis, in qua exponerentur Cæs. Majest. causæ, quare non reciperemus confutationem, et ea, quæ objecerant adversarii, diluerentur.*"

after it was read, and the report was spread about the middle of August that Melanchthon was preparing a reply, which the delegates from Nuremberg, however, pronounce false.* In fact, it was thought that a suitable reply would be impossible, since the Protestants could obtain no copy of the Confutation.

Melanchthon prepared the Apology, though the other theologians assisted him with their advice, as he states in the Preface. To Camerarius he wrote, September 20th: "I have written in these days an Apology of our Confession, which shall, if necessary, be presented." He himself had not heard the Confutation.† For his knowledge of its contents he depended on the memory of those who heard it, and the notes taken during the reading. These notes, taken by Camerarius, were of course imperfect and did not enable him to prepare a complete refutation of the Confutation.

Finding that the mild tone of the Confession failed to gain the approbation of their opponents, Melanchthon was determined to make the Apology more severe than the Confession. To the court preacher of the emperor he wrote: "We are engaged in preparing an Apology, which is to be presented to the emperor, and which shall be more severe than the Confession if we cannot obtain that which is right.‡" "I have written it carefully and vehemently" he wrote to Camerarius. The Confession was written with the hope of forming an agreement with the Papists; and in order that this hope might the more easily be realized, Melanchthon, as he himself states in the preface to the Apology, made the Confession mild, and adopted as far as possible the usual mode of speaking about religious matters.§ But when the Apology was prepared, which was only to be presented if no reasonable terms could be obtained from the emperor, the hope of agreement had vanished, and therefore

* August 19th, Corp. Ref. II. No. 848.

† Letter to Camerarius, August 6th.

‡ Corp. Ref. II. No. 907. "*Sumus enim occupati in adornanda apologia, exhibenda Imperatori, quæ futura est aliquanto asperior, quam fuit confessio, si nihil æqui impetrare possumus.*"

§ Mueller, *Symbolische Buecher* 75.

it could be made more severe (*aliquanto asperior*) than the Confession.

After the recess had been read to the confessors, they replied through Bruck that they did not regard their Confession as refuted, but so well based on God's Word that it could not be proved unchristian. Had they been able to obtain a copy of the Confutation they would have replied to it, so that the emperor would have been convinced that it proved nothing against their Confession. But, in order that it might not remain entirely unanswered, they had prepared a reply to the Confutation as well as they could after merely hearing it read; Bruck thereupon handed the Apology to palsgrave Frederick, who accepted it. But the emperor, into whose ear Ferdinand whispered, motioned to him to return it to Bruck, which was done. Bruck then continued, stating that they were no sect, but that they held the true doctrines of Christianity. He also requested a copy of the recess.*

As it was already late the diet adjourned to meet at 8 the next morning, Sep 23rd. That same evening, however, Truchsess and Vehus brought a copy of the recess to the marquis of Brandenburg, and urged him to accept it. At 5 the next morning the margrave assembled the counselors and delegates to consider the matter. They could not accept the recess, and gave their reasons to Truchsess and Vehus, who were requested to present the same to the emperor.†

After the confessors had waited an hour, on the morning of the 23rd, the emperor probably being at mass, they were addressed in the diet by the elector of Brandenburg. It was a very violent address. He stated that the emperor was surprised that they still regarded their Confession as not refuted. Its doctrines had long ago been declared heretical and unchristian by various councils. The supposition that it was true implied that the emperor, and the rest of the Catholics, and the ancestors of the elector of Saxony

* Foersteman II. 478. Seck. 1125.

† Foerstemann II. 601. Seck. 1127. Melancthon's principal objection to the recess was the fact that it declared that the Confession had been refuted. Letter to Camerarius, Corp. Ref. II. No. 914.

himself were heretics. The emperor would not, he said, alter the recess; they were therefore urged to accept it as the other members of the diet had done, and to remember that, if they refused to do so, they would be responsible to God for the dissensions and disturbances of the peace which would follow. He closed by saying that the other Catholic members of the diet had requested him to state, that they and the emperor had vowed, and sworn, and pledged themselves to risk their property, their lives, their lands, and their people, for the purpose of putting an end to this matter.*

Harsh as this language was, and gloomy the prospect it presented, the confessors had already proved their firmness too frequently and nobly to be intimidated now. It was better to suffer all that the Papists could inflict than to accept the recess. Accordingly Bruck replied in their name, that the Confession was so well grounded in Scripture that all the gates of hell could not prevail against it. No occasion had been given, they claimed, for the other princes to form an alliance against them. They could not accept the recess, but begged the emperor to give them time properly to consider the matter, promising at the same time to obey the emperor in all things as far as they could do so conscientiously.

Again the emperor replied through Joachim of Brandenburg, that he too had a conscience, and that he was less inclined to give up his views of the holy Christian Church and of the long-established holy Christian faith, than the elector of Saxony and his allies were willing to renounce their views. If they would accept the recess, there it was; if not, he would issue another Christian recess in reference to the course to be pursued, and would seek counsel from the pope and other Christian powers as to what he, as the protector of the church, ought to do for the preservation of the true Christian faith, for the destruction of this new error and sect, and for the restoration of union in the German nation.

The confessors asked for a copy of the recess and for time to weigh the matter. Both were refused. In their

* Chytræus 287. Salig I. 841. Seck. 1127.

answer to the above they, therefore, commended the whole matter to God, appealed to the emperor to be to them a kind master, and promised to do their utmost to promote his honor and welfare.

Here the matter ended. Both parties were immovable. The emperor would not alter the recess, and the confessors would not accept it as it was.

The harsh language and the severe threats of the elector of Brandenburg greatly displeased some of the Catholics * who assured the Protestant princes and delegates that they did not approve of the threats, that they had not agreed to enter into an alliance against them, and that they would use their influence to maintain peace. Even the emperor is said to have been displeased with the harsh language used. And the effort was made to assure the Protestants that the intentions of the other party were not as warlike as they had been represented.

After these fruitless attempts to make the confessors accept the recess, the elector of Saxony approached the emperor to bid him farewell. Charles was affected. Extending his hand to the elector he said: "Uncle, uncle, I did not expect this of you."† Silently, and with tears in his eyes, the elector withdrew. That same afternoon he left Augsburg, taking with him Melancthon and Spalatin. At the same time Ernest of Luneburg, and Wolfgang of Anhalt took their departue. The elector however left delegates at Augsburg, who were ordered by him to use all proper means to maintain the peace.

Luther was heartily glad that the elector had escaped safely from Augsburg. "God be praised," he wrote to a friend,‡ "that our dear prince is at last delivered from hell. Let the will of God be done; He is the Author of peace and the Arbiter of war. We have done enough; whoever will not have peace can have disturbance enough from God's hand." To the elector himself he wrote a

* Among these were the electors of Mentz, of Treves, and of the Palatinate, Henry duke of Brunswick, and Louis duke of Bavaria. Seck. 1130. Corp. Ref. II. No. 916. Förstemann II. 614, 620.

† "Ohem, Ohem, dess haett ich mich zu euer Lieb nicht versehen."

‡ To Spengler, September 28.

cheering letter: "I am heartily rejoiced that your electoral highness has escaped from the hell at Augsburg through the grace of God. . . . I have committed the matter into the hands of my God; He commenced this work, that I know; He will also, I believe, finish it. It is not in man's power to originate such doctrines. Since then the work is God's and since all things are subject neither to our power nor to our skill, but alone to God, therefore I will wait and see who those may be that can conquer God himself. Let come what will, in the name of God."

The elector's trust was the same as that of Luther. "I have no doubt," he said on his journey home, "that God will defend his sacred word and its confessors." To a preacher in Nuremberg he said: "If one of my neighbors, or any one else, attacks me for the gospel's sake, then I will defend myself with all my might. But if the emperor attacks me, then I must submit, for he is my lord; and how can a more honorable injury or death befall me than for the sake of God's word?"*

The elector stopped at Coburg and took Luther with him, and reached Torgau the 11th day of October, after an absence of more than six months.

After the elector had departed, the delegates, who had signed the Confession, as well as those of other cities, were much perplexed as to the course to be pursued respecting the recess. Those from Augsburg feared to accept it, because the people would be opposed to it; they feared to reject it, on account of the emperor and other Catholic princes. Those from Frankfurt, Nordlingen, Hall and other cities, were in similar perplexity. The delegates from Nuremberg were firm. "It is our opinion," said they, "that we ought not to yield unless the favor of the emperor is valued more highly than that of God."† They encouraged their friends at home to be true to the gospel in spite of all threats; and in return their friends at home wrote them cheering letters, breathing the heroic spirit of faith. To their delegates at Augsburg, Nuremberg, when the threats of the Papists became more and more violent, sent

* Seck. 1184.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 915.

these words:* "Since now the condition of affairs is the most dangerous, God gives us the choice of either being true to his word and of being Christians, or else of forsaking it and proving faithless to him. And, indeed, he who would let even greater dangers move him to abandon the gospel, must be a very weak member of Christ; he can never have understood God's truth and the gospel. Only those who have never tasted God's goodness, consolation and grace, or who have no conscience, are ignorant how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God, or to deny the plain truth. Since now the alternative offered is, either to stand fast, or to flee, it becomes us truly to regard God, in whose hands are our life, our death and destruction, more than the whole world. . . . Therefore take courage and act accordingly. Since we do not seek our own temporal interest in this matter, but only God's glory and our salvation, and for this sake must risk all that God has given us, therefore God will devise means to protect us against our adversaries."

The emperor was greatly irritated. His failures to restore peace disappointed him. He expected to settle the religious questions in the same way as he was in the habit of disposing of political ones; but all his intrigues and worldly wisdom proved unavailing. The firmness of the confessors in maintaining their Confession, when he ordered them to renounce it; the plain hints that an effort to subdue the Lutherans by force, would be resisted by force; and especially the refusal to accept the recess, which he regarded as very moderate, looked like insubordination, and greatly incensed him. After the elector of Saxony had withdrawn, his anger was apparent in the diet. The Protestant delegate were told that he had said, "an effort was being made to teach him a new faith, but the time had come when doctrine must not merely be opposed to doctrine, but blows must be resorted to, in which case it would be seen who was the stronger." As the Catholic princes had already pledged their support to the utmost of their ability for the extermination of the "heresy," the delegates of the Catholic cities were called on to do the same. Some were very will-

* September 26, Corp. Ref. II. No. 917.

ing, others hesitated.* But finally all the cities, except those who professed to adhere to Luther's and Zwingli's doctrines, and the cities of Ulm, Frankfurt and Hall,† promised to comply with the emperor's request.

"Lately I expected peace," said Brentz, October 1st, "but now the greatest dangers threaten us. The papistical princes have formed a league against us, that they may root out our doctrine." "Our adversaries are bloodthirsty," wrote the delegates from Nuremberg. Their desire was to commence a war against the Protestants at once; but was it expedient? It seemed as if providentially the Turks were used to prevent a religious war for the present. The danger from the Turks was great, and it was decided to raise troops at once to oppose their progress. But if the Protestants were themselves threatened with war, they would not only refuse to assist against the Turks, but might attack their Catholic neighbors when their troops were away. The necessity of peace in the empire itself, before any effectual effort could be made to resist a foreign foe, was therefore felt.‡ It was accordingly found advisable to make new efforts to secure peace between the Catholics and the confessors. The Protestant delegates were approached on the subject, but without favorable results. They were willing to assist in a war against the Turks on condition that the Papists would give them the assurance that they would not attack them before the convening of a council. But a satisfactory assurance was not given.

In the meanwhile a new recess was being prepared, which was read in the diet the 19th of November, when the delegates of the elector of Saxony and of Philip of Hesse had already left the city. It was more severe than the draft of the recess which the confessors had refused to accept. It demanded the return of the Protestants to the Romish church until a council was convened, which council was to meet in eighteen months. Those who refused to accept the

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 918.

† The delegates of these three cities asked permission to consider the matter, and confer with the authorities at home on the subject.

‡ Corp. Ref. II. No. 922, 924.

recess, were threatened with the loss of life and property. It declared that a league had been formed by the emperor and the papal princes and cities to defend the old order of things and execute the recess.*

The city of Augsburg refused to accept the recess, in spite of all the threats of the Papists. It was customary for the seal of the city in which the diet met to be attached to the recess. But the city of Augsburg did not offer its seal, and another city (Werd) which accepted the recess, sent its seal for the purpose of affixing it to the recess.

Thus ended the fierce contest at Augsburg between external authority in religion and spiritual freedom. The Fathers, the Councils, the Church, the established order of things, cried one party. The Bible, and the Bible only, was the response of the other. He who believes what the Romish church teaches, is a member of the Christian church, said the Papists; therefore, they argued, you Protestants are not members of the Christian church. The Protestants said, he is a member of Christ's church who receives the doctrines of Scripture; we receive them, therefore we are members of his church. The very act of preparing the Confession was a grand protest against the assumptions of Rome; for by this act the confessors put into practice the right they claimed for themselves and all Christians, of going directly to the Bible for their doctrines, and not to Rome. In all matters of secondary importance

* The recess, indeed, forbade the publication of any new works in favor of the Evangelical faith, but a thousand edicts could not have silenced Luther. In 1531 he published his "Warning to his dear Germans," the object of which was to prevent the execution of the threats contained in the recess. But he took a still bolder step in publishing the recess itself with notes. In the Preface he states that it is not his intention to attack the emperor, or any other properly constituted authority, but those who had influenced the emperor to issue such an edict, namely the pope and his agents. How little his heroic nature was intimidated by the threats of the Papists, is evident from his severe attacks on the recess, and from his scathing criticism. "There," he says, "we have the principal author of this edict, the spirit of the pope, the father of all lies. It is easy to imagine what good is contained in such an edict, invented by the servants of the devil." Thus this recess was treated by him with the same contempt as preceding ones.

they were willing to make concessions, such as mere forms, and ceremonies, and church government, if they were only allowed to retain the Scripture and to interpret Scripture by Scripture. Both parties, indeed, regarded the Bible as divine authority; but the question was, who shall interpret it for the individual? The Papists answered, the church, for she has the spirit of God. But the Protestants held that each individual Christian has that Spirit, which consequently enables him to interpret God's Word without the interposition of that abstract idea, the church.*

The views of the Papists respecting the authority of the church and the nature of faith, made it impossible for them to understand the spirit, and appreciate the motives of their opponents. So erroneous and mechanical were their notions of faith that they actually thought the Lutherans could change their faith if the emperor decided against it, or used powerful promises and threats; just as if faith was an arbitrary thing, rather than a conviction, an inner necessity. The pure motives of the confessors and their conscientiousness were accordingly constantly misinterpreted by the other party. Had they known their opponents, the Papists would have known that nothing could induce them to change their faith, except a change of their convictions.

The emperor and his party came to the diet with the full determination to make an end of the "new heresy," as Luther's doctrines were called. They imagined that the task would be easier than it proved to be. In their estimate of the chances of success they took into account only their own

* The Protestants occupied a position between two extremes. One of these extremes was that of the Papists, who made the Romish church the authority in matters of faith, thus destroying individual freedom. The other extreme was that of the fanatics during the Reformation, who pretended to have an inner illumination (God's Spirit) which enabled them to dispense with the Scriptures, as well as with the authority of the church. The Protestants held that the Christian is indeed illuminated by God's Spirit, not however independent of God's Word, but the Spirit illuminates the Christian through the Sacred Scriptures. Whilst thus avoiding the errors of both extremes, the Protestants escape the slavery of the papacy and the licentiousness of the fanatics. They secure for the individual the spiritual liberty of the Gospel, thus freeing the mind while keeping it within the proper limits.

numerical strength and that of the Protestants, not the power of truth, and right, and God. Throughout they were consistent in their reliance on this strength. Fairness in their dealings with the Lutherans was no part of their programme. The fair promises of the emperor's proclamation proved to be a mere bait. Sometimes great pretensions at fairness were made, but all for effect's sake, for back of them were found trickery and knavery, Campeggio and the pope. They seemed to be conscious of the weakness of their cause, for they were very anxious to avoid discussion, they refused their Confutation to the confessors, they wanted to prohibit the publication of the Confession and other documents. There is no doubt that some were sincere and thought they were doing God service; but others were more anxious about self, as was evident from their willingness to yield in doctrine rather than abuses which secured them money, position, and power.

It is true that some have attributed base motives to the Protestants for their firmness, as if they thereby expected to gain some temporal advantages. But the whole history of the diet proves conclusively that they were impelled to act as they did by a sense of duty. For their firmness they were threatened with the loss of every earthly advantage, their very lives were endangered; whereas great promises were made them if they would but renounce their faith. Their earnest desire for peace, and their willingness to make concessions in non-essentials, but not in essentials, prove that they were sincere, and that their firmness was not mere obstinacy. Their heroism was genuine and noble, not the result of prejudice or fanaticism. They loved the truth and its Author, and this is the key to their actions. They were not only willing to make known their views and the reasons for the same, but they also sought more light and were willing to accept it from their enemies, if they had any to give. Convinced that truth can bear the light, they invited discussion and published their views to the world. And in their faith they were not mistaken. The emperor and his party signally failed. Protestantism was not destroyed, Rome was not triumphant. In spite of external authority and the superiority of numbers; in spite of threats and edicts, the diet was a signal triumph for evangelical

religion. The Protestants refuted the calumnies of their enemies; they became conscious of their strength and of the weakness of the Papists; in resisting the threats and promises of their adversaries they gained in strength so as to rise above their own fears—resistance increased their power of resistance, courage begat courage; officially they proclaimed their faith, which was now published throughout the empire and Christendom; and a definite, systematic, form was given to their doctrines on which, as a basis, they could continue to rear the temple of evangelical religion.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER AT AUGSBURG.

ALTHOUGH the Confession whose history has thus far been considered, was the most important, it was not the only one presented at Augsburg. Its superior importance, however, is such that it is par excellence called the Augsburg Confession.

On the 3rd of July Zwingli, who was not at the diet, published his confession of faith at Zurich, copies of which were immediately sent to Augsburg.* The *Fidei Ratio*, as he called it, was however merely a private confession. He himself states that he had not time to send it to the various preachers and churches in Switzerland, for their approval. Zwingli sent it by a special messenger to the emperor, but it received no public or official recognition. Dr. Eck, however, prepared a bitter refutation of this confession.

The confession consists of twelve articles. Besides his peculiar view of the sacraments, and especially of the Lord's Supper, Zwingli's confession differed from that prepared by Melancthon on various other points. Original sin is regarded as a disease or misfortune, not as actual sin, because it is not a transgression of God's law. Instead of passing silently over the Romish doctrine of purgatory, as is done by the Augsburg Confession, Zwingli boldly rejects it. Indeed, his confession is much more bold and direct in its opposition to the papacy than the Augsburg Confession. The confessors were greatly displeased with its spirit, which

* Salig. I. 881.

they regarded as fanatical. To Bucer Melancthon wrote: * "Zwingli has sent a confession in which he certainly does not want to seem to differ from us in words only; and in some articles he is more furious than is necessary. It seems that a Helvetic rather than a Christian spirit impelled him to send hither a confession so ferocious." To Luther he wrote †: "Zwingli has sent hither a printed confession; you might simply say that he is deranged. Concerning original sin and the use of the sacraments he plainly renews the old errors. About the ceremonies he speaks quite Helvetically, that is, most barbarously; he wants all the ceremonies to be abolished. He urges his views of the Lord's Supper vehemently. He wants all the bishops to be removed."

This boldness of the Swiss, their warlike spirit, and the decision and plainness with which they opposed the Romish errors and abuses, made them objects of much greater hatred to the Papists than the Lutherans were. With the latter the Catholics hoped to form an agreement; but they had no hope that this could be done with the Zwinglians.

We have already seen that two cities signed the Augsburg Confession before it was presented to the diet, and four more after it was read. Four other Protestant cities represented at the diet would also have signed it, had they not differed from the Lutherans on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Nor were they pleased with the tone of Zwingli's confession. There was, therefore, no other alternative than to prepare a confession of their own. The cities were Strasburg, Memmingen, Costnitz, and Lindau, and their confession was called the Tetrapolitana, or the confession of the four cities. ‡

As Philip of Hesse had tried to form a union between the Lutherans and Zwinglians at Marburg, so he made an effort at Augsburg to accomplish the same object. He wanted all the evangelical Christians to form a brotherhood. And, even if they differed on matters of minor importance, he wanted all the Protestants at Augsburg to

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 797.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 781.

‡ Chytræus 351. Salig. I. 387.

sign the same Confession, thinking that one confession signed by all the Protestant princes and cities, would have more weight than the presentation of different ones. He requested Melanchthon and Brentz to give their views on the proposed union. They state* that they greatly regretted the division among evangelical Christians, still they could not regard as brethren those who profess and defend erroneous doctrines. Those who allegorize in the doctrine of the eucharist will also introduce other dangerous errors and occasion much offence and great confusion. Not only do they oppose a union with the Zwinglians, but if the Catholics see fit to prohibit the doctrine of Zwingli, they do not think it right to oppose such a decree.†

Whilst they oppose the union on account of the erroneous doctrines of the Zwinglians, they refer to another reason. It was dangerous to form such a union. Melanchthon dreaded war, and to unite with them might involve them in war. He, therefore, refers to the warlike disposition of the Zwinglians, and their boast that they had men and money prepared for that purpose, and would receive help from other nations. Were the union consummated, then, he thought, the emperor would also suspect the Lutherans of being intent on war; and the Protestants would so feel their strength that they would be more disposed to go to war.‡ The union with the Zwinglians, he feared, would be the end of all hope of forming an agreement with the Catholics.

The arguments used did not satisfy the landgrave, who continued earnestly to advocate the union. In his views of the Lord's Supper he was evidently much more Zwinglian than Lutheran, as his reply clearly proves.§ All his efforts, however, failed on account of the opposition of Melanchthon and Brentz. Bucer and Capito, delegates from Strasburg, were most active in their efforts to form the union. They thought the difference between the Lutherans and

* They replied to Philip the 11th of June. Corp. Ref. II. No. 718.

† Fœrstemann II. 462.

‡ Planck III. 90-92.

§ Corp. Ref. II. No. 719.

themselves was more verbal than real. Brentz earnestly requested an interview with them, but Melanchthon refused a personal interview, though he was willing to correspond with him on the subject.

Strange, indeed, it is that Melanchthon was opposed to all earnest efforts to unite all the Protestants. The doctrine of the Lord's Supper was the rock on which the Protestant Church split. Bucer, as well as Melanchthon, believed that Christ, the divine and human Christ, is present in the eucharist, just as he is to all believers at all times, really and essentially present. Neither insisted on a local presence, or a presence that occupies space. But Bucer believed that this presence was for faith, for the soul only, not for the mouth, and for this reason Melanchthon refused to fraternize with him.

Melanchthon was so anxious to make peace with the Papists that he was willing to enter into innumerable conferences with them, and to make them many concessions, for the sake of being tolerated in the papal church. But when Bucer and Capito sought an interview it was refused; all efforts at union were frustrated; their doctrine was pronounced "hateful;" union with them might lead to war; if the Papists wanted to persecute the Zwinglians, let them do so; and Bucer was charged with duplicity and with attempts to deceive the people on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Bucer keenly felt the repeated repulses of Melanchthon. "Your party," he wrote to him, "may see to it what spirit they follow in refusing to confer with us personally, and in charging us with much that cannot be proved."*

* About the middle of June it was reported that Melanchthon was spreading the report that Strasburg and other Zwinglian governments were making active preparations to commence war against the Papists, a report which was very injurious to the Zwinglians. It was suspected that Melanchthon was willing to have the Zwinglians sacrificed in order that the Lutherans might be saved. This suspicion that such reports about the Zwinglians were spread by Melanchthon, is reported by the delegates from Nuremberg, though they doubt its correctness. Those however who informed them of the matter claimed to have seen Melanchthon's own handwriting on the subject. Corp. Ref. II. No. 725.

Bucer now turned to Luther, with the hope of inducing him to regard them as brethren. For this purpose he wrote him a letter, which Luther however refused to answer; but he wrote to Melanchthon September 11th, that he hated Bucer's tricks and wicked intentions. But in order that nothing might be left untried that could possibly lead to union, Bucer made a journey to Coburg to have an interview with Luther, who, as might have been expected, was less willing to yield than Melanchthon. He contended that the wicked as well as believers receive the body and blood of Christ in the eucharist, whilst Bucer believed that only believers can receive Christ, and that they receive him by faith.*

At this time, therefore, no union was possible, though six years later one was formed, when at a meeting at Wittenberg in May, 1536, a formula of Concord was adopted.†

As the Protestants could not all be united on the Confession prepared by Melanchthon, some of the cities presented confessions of their own. In July the city of Ulm presented its confession.‡ The city of Strasburg also ordered a confession to be prepared. Bucer performed the principal part of the labor, assisted by Hedio and Capito.§ This confession, which consisted of twenty-two articles, was signed by the three other cities mentioned above, besides Strasburg, and was presented to the emperor the 11th of

* Bucer's account of his interview with Luther is found in Salig. I. 895. He states that Luther took offence at the doctrine that in the Lord's Supper Christ is present only to the soul. When Bucer replied that in a confession of his Luther had written that the eating by the mouth applied only to the bread and was understood of Christ's body only through the sacramental union, for which reason the body could be food for the soul only, Luther became milder, but he refused to agree to certain articles for fear they might occasion offence. He however acknowledged that Bucer taught the presence of Christ in the sacrament, which Bucer claims always to have taught, though not in such a sense that Christ is united with, or is inclosed in, the bread in a bodily manner.

† Already in 1532 at a convention at Schweinfurt the delegates from Strasburg subscribed the Augsburg Confession, though without abandoning the Tetrapolitan confession.

‡ Corp. Ref. II. 779 and 785.

§ Foerstemann II. 22.

July. Though not publicly read before the diet, a sharp refutation was prepared by Faber, Eck, and Cochläus, which was read the 11th of October.*

As the doctrine of justification by faith was the principal subject of dispute between the Catholics and Protestants, so the doctrine of the Lord's supper was the principal subject of dispute between the Lutherans and Zwinglians. As this doctrine, which rent the Protestant Church, is so important in the history of the Augsburg Confession, we shall inquire into the various views held on this subject at Augsburg. The differences consisted chiefly in the views on the nature of the sacraments and on the nature of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper.

According to the Augsburg Confession the sacraments are not only "tokens by which Christians may be known externally, but signs and evidences of the divine will towards us, for the purpose of exciting and strengthening our faith; hence they also require faith, and they are properly used then only when received in faith, and when faith is strengthened by them."† But the sacraments not only require faith, and strengthen faith, but they are also means of grace through which the Holy Spirit operates on the hearts of men. Thus Art. 5 says: "For the purpose of obtaining this faith, God has instituted the ministry, and given the Gospel and the Sacraments, through which, as means, he imparts the Holy Spirit, who in his own time and place, works faith in those that hear the Gospel."

With this view of the sacraments the papal Confutation agrees. They are also regarded by the Confutation as not mere signs by which Christians are known, but also as tokens of God's will towards us. But whilst Art. 5 and 13 of the Confutation acknowledge the truth in the same arti-

* Foerstemann calls attention to the similarity in the history of the Tetrapolitan and the Augsburg Confessions (II. 23). Both were prepared in German and Latin; both were presented to the emperor; a refutation to each was prepared and read to the confessors, but a copy was refused them; an apology was prepared for both confessions: and in both cases the Confession with its apology was published in 1531. But the Augsburg Confession increased in authority, whilst the Tetrapolitan was almost forgotten.

† Art. 13.

cles in the Confession, they want additions to be made to these articles. The seven sacraments of the Romish church should be distinctly recognized, and it should also be acknowledged that the Holy Spirit produces in us, through the Word and the Sacraments, not mere faith, but faith that works by love. The 5th article of the Confutation teaches that in Baptism "not only faith, but also hope and love are poured into the subject."

In the original Apology of the Augsburg Confession* the number of the sacraments is regarded as a matter of no importance, which might consequently be passed over in silence as was done in the Confession.† Our opponents "know very well," says the Apology, "that it is a matter of small importance, whether it is held that there are more or less than seven sacraments." "If sacraments are, however, to be regarded as ceremonies which Christ has commanded us to perform, and with which at the same time he has connected a promise or grace, then there are evidently but two such ceremonies, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper. If they want to call Absolution a sacrament, we shall not object, because God has commanded absolution and has connected a promise with it."

Melanchthon's definition of a sacrament as given in the Apology—a ceremony commanded by Christ with which special blessing or grace is connected—limits the sacraments to two. But the Catholics included in the sacraments ceremonies which were instituted before Christ's advent, as marriage, and even such as were instituted by mere human authority, as extreme unction.‡

An important distinction between the Catholic and Lutheran view of the sacraments is the manner in which they affect men. The Papists made the mere ceremony efficacious. Their view of the meritorious nature of good works was also applied to the sacraments. Independent of the

* See the unaltered Apology in Förstemann II. 483, 598.

† Förstemann II. 548, 549.

‡ The Catholic view of the sacraments is so indefinite that there seems to be no particular reason for limiting the number to seven, and in the Apology Melanchthon expresses his surprise that prayer was not regarded as a sacrament by the Papists.

faith of the recipient they communicated blessings (*ex opere operato*). The process is a mechanical one. By the mere use of the sacrament of Baptism, for instance, faith, hope and love are "poured into" the subject according to the Confutation. The Augsburg Confession, on the other hand, makes faith in the recipient of the sacrament the condition for the reception of grace through the sacrament.

Zwingli's confession does not regard the sacraments as means of grace at all. Instead of being the means through which God communicates grace to us, they are merely the evidences (*Zeugnisse*) of the grace which has already been given to us. Grace is communicated only by the Holy Spirit; for this He needs no means, but He bestows it directly (not mediately, but immediately) as a divine power or gift. Before the sacrament is received the Holy Spirit must already be in man, otherwise man would have to prepare himself for the reception of the sacrament without grace.

The Tetrapolitan confession calls the sacraments "holy symbols." "The principal ones are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The ancients, we believe, called these *sacraments*, not only because they are visible signs of invisible grace, as Augustine teaches, but also because through them a confession of faith is made" (art. 16). In the sacrament, therefore, God gives us an evidence of his grace, and we, in receiving the sacrament, give an evidence of our faith—that is, the participation in the sacrament is a confession on our part.

The definition of the word sacrament, which is not a Scriptural term at all, may be of little importance; but it is of the utmost importance to understand, and use, Christ's institutions as He himself did. When, therefore, the word sacrament is used to designate Baptism and the Lord's Supper it is important that a meaning should be attached to it, which does justice to these institutions of our Master. For a misunderstanding of their real nature will lead to their abuse. More importance may be attached to a sacrament than Christ intended, or we may attach to it less. In either case abuse will be the result. The Lord's Supper is especially liable to abuse. This is, however, less owing to a mistaken view of sacraments in general than to an erro-

neous view of the nature of Christ's presence in the eucharist. Whilst the Catholic devoutly worships the host, others treat the Supper as little better than an ordinary meal.

The Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation needs no particular explanation. The bread and wine, it is taught, are, as far as the substance is concerned, changed into the real body and blood of Christ in the act of consecration. This change is real, though not perceptible to the senses since the bread and wine apparently remain unchanged. For the purpose of defending the practice of withholding the cup from the laity, the Catholic theologians made a special effort to prove that in each element the communicant receives the body and blood of Christ, so that in withholding the cup nothing really essential is withheld from the laity.

This doctrine of transubstantiation was rejected by all the reformers as a mere human invention. But Melancthon's desire to use the customary expressions for the sake of more easily forming an agreement with the Papists, as he states in the Preface to the Apology, was never more successfully carried out than in the 10th article of the Confession. Whilst it does not teach transubstantiation, it is so worded as not to be at all in conflict with that doctrine.*

* There has been much dispute on the real meaning of this article. Some think the Confession teaches Melancthon's view of the Lord's Supper, and not Luther's (so Heppe in his "Confessionelle Entwicklung d. altprot. Kirche Deutschlands," p. 64-71). Others contend that Luther's view is strictly taught in this article. And some, Protestants as well as Catholics, have taken the article to teach the doctrine of transubstantiation. Thus Scultetus, a Reformed theologian of the 16th century, states that the 10th article of the Confession actually teaches, and was intended to teach, the Romish doctrine. Planck [p. 112, note], whilst showing that this is a mistake, nevertheless says: "It is probably quite certain that the Catholics permitted this article to remain unaltered, because it did not at all come in conflict with their views of transubstantiation; and it may be just as certain that Melancthon intentionally wrote the expressions used in the article, for the purpose of not attacking that doctrine, and for the purpose of avoiding a dispute with the Papists on that subject." The enemies of the Confession, indeed, go too far, when they say the Confession was intended to teach the Romish doctrine of the Lord's Supper. But the most ardent admirer of the Confession must, if he is candid, acknowledge that

The literal translation of the German article is as follows: "Concerning the Lord's Supper it is taught, that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present, under the form of bread and wine, in the Supper, and are there administered and received. Therefore the opposite doctrine is rejected."* Here nothing is said that is in the least inconsistent with transubstantiation. It is not taught that the substance of bread and wine remains unchanged. Of this substance nothing is said. It is only affirmed that "the form of bread and wine" is present, which is the very same expression used by the Papists in teaching their doctrine—"sub specie panis et vini." But what is it that is distributed to, and eaten by the communicant? It is the true body and blood of Christ, but under the form of bread and wine.

The presence of Christ is a special one, not like His general presence everywhere; it is more special even than His general presence in the hearts of believers. But this special presence is affirmed only of the body and blood of Christ, not of his spirit or of his divine nature. Whilst a real bodily presence is affirmed, nothing is said about the spiritual.

This presence is local, that is, it is connected with an object occupying space; for the presence is "under the form of bread and wine," which form necessarily occupies space, and consequently the presence connected with this form, must also be local. But not only are the body and blood connected with the form of the bread and wine, but they

the Confession not only fails to reject the Romish doctrine, but also uses language which may, without violence, be regarded as in perfect harmony with that doctrine.

*"Von-dem Abendmahl des Herrn wird also gelehret, dass wahrer Leib und Blut Christi wahrhaftiglich unter der Gestalt des Brods und Weins im Abendmahl gegenwaertig sey und da ausgetheilt und genommen wird. Derhalben wird aush die Gegenlehre verworfen."

The Latin article differs somewhat from the German. "De cœna Domini docent, quod corpus et Sanguis Christi vere adsint, et distribuantur vescentibus in cœna Domini; et improbant secus docentes." Here it is merely taught that Christ's body and blood are really present, while the German is more explicit and says the "real" body and blood of Christ. The Latin also omits the words "under the form of bread and wine." Bread and wine are not at all mentioned.

are also distributed* and received, which of course implies motion in space.

The reception of the true body and blood of Christ is not made dependent on faith, but all the communicants, unbelievers as well as believers, receive the true body and blood. But only those who have faith receive a blessing.†

The Protestants were requested to present their views so that it might be evident in what respects they agreed with and differed from the Catholics. If now a doctrine was so stated that it might be interpreted to harmonize with the Catholic doctrine, the inference was natural that the Protestants agreed with the Catholics. And the Catholics acknowledged in their Confutation that this article contained nothing contrary to their doctrine. They say: "The 10th article, as far as the words are concerned, has nothing wrong that is to be condemned, for they acknowledge that in the sacrament, after proper consecration, the body and blood of Christ are essentially and truly present." But they want the Confession to state distinctly that Christ is entirely present under each of the elements. And, knowing that the Protestants in their former writings had rejected the Romish doctrine, they want the Confession to state distinctly, that in the consecration the essence of the bread is changed into the body of Christ. Thus the twenty Catholics who prepared this Confutation found nothing in the wording of this article in conflict with their doctrine, though they wanted that doctrine distinctly taught in it.‡

* "Distribuantur" and "ausgetheilt."

† Just as during preaching all hear the same gospel, though to one it is a savor of life, to another a savor of death; so it is in the Lord's Supper. All the communicants, according to the Augsburg Confession, receive the true body and blood of Christ; but what is a blessing to the believer is a curse to the unbeliever.

‡ The fact that at Augsburg the Papists regarded the 10th article of the Confession as in harmony with their doctrine, as well as the very language of that article, made many of the Protestants suspicious that the Romish doctrine was taught in that article. During the Reformation yet Hardenburg, a preacher in Bremen, says of the 10th article: "It is too much like the doctrine of the Papists, who teach that the bread and wine are changed. Every one knows how for centuries the words were understood in the Romish church when it was said that in the Lord's Supper the body of Christian

When the Catholic and Protestant committees of seven met to make an effort to form an agreement, the Romish party requested Dr. Eck to give his views on the articles of the Confession, showing wherein they agreed with, and differed from, the Catholic doctrines, so that their work might be made more easy. Of the 10th article Dr. Eck says: "The 10th article agrees with us as far as the real presence of the body and blood of Christ is concerned. But it must not be interpreted to mean that the laity are to receive both the elements."

In the colloquies of these committees article after article was taken up and discussed. In the 10th article Dr. Eck wanted the word "wesentlich" added to the German, and "substantialiter" or "realiter" to the Latin,* to which the Protestant committee agreed.

A report of the articles on which the Catholic and Protestant committees were agreed, in Spalatin's handwriting,† says: "We are agreed on the 9th, 10th, and 11th articles."‡

After the colloquies were ended, the Catholic committee made their report to the diet, in which they say on article 10: "They agree with us that the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are really present in the highly venerable sacrament of the altar. And for the purpose of explaining the article more clearly this has been added to it, that

present under the form of the bread. The Catholics at Augsburg took these words in their usual sense. For this reason they approved of this article, which would not have been the case had they not believed that it agreed with their doctrine." Planck, *Prot. Theol.* vol. II. part II. p. 205.

Frederick, elector of the Palatinate, objected to the adoption of the German Confession (1560), because in the 10th article, the words "under the form of bread and wine" were papistical. Heppe, *Gesch. d. deuts. Protest.* I. p. 376. At the same time Philip, landgrave of Hesse, declared that it would be impossible to sign the German Confession, because it taught the papistical doctrine of transubstantiation. Heppe 378.

* Salig. I. 296. The Apology actually uses the word "substantialiter" in speaking of Art. 10.

† Förstemann II. 230.

‡ The Apology of the Confession also states that the 10th article was approved by the Catholics.

the body of Christ is really and 'essentially' (wesentlich) 'present.'"*

Some parts of the Catholic report did not please the Protestants; they therefore presented a report of their own, making corrections in the Catholic report. But they also state that on the 10th article they were agreed.

After it was thus officially stated by both parties that they were agreed on the 10th article, the article was no more discussed. From that time the only question respecting the Lord's Supper was, whether the cup should be given to the laity?

The Confession, therefore, though not directly teaching transubstantiation, does not reject it. There is nothing in the 10th article to which the strictest Papist can object. And after the agreement to Eck's additions, the Papists thought that the article could not teach anything else than transubstantiation.

But does not the Apology reject the Romish doctrine? In the original Apology very little is said about the tenth article—as follows: "The tenth article. We do not say that the dead body of Christ is received in the Sacrament, or that the body is without blood, or that the blood is received without the body, but we hold and confess, that the whole living Christ is there in each part of the sacrament."†

But the original Apology was not received into the Book

* Chytræus 180. This same report in summing up the result of the colloquies, states that on fifteen of the doctrinal articles the Protestants agree with them—on art. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18, and 19.

† Fœrstemann II. 496, 545. "De Decimo. Neque nos fingimus, mortuum corpus Christi sumi in Sacramento aut corpus exanguie, aut sanguinem sine corpore sumi, sed sentimus, integrum et vivum Christum adesse in qualibet parte Sacramenti." Here Melancthon teaches the very doctrine for which the Papists so earnestly contended, that the entire Christ (body and blood) is present with each of the elements. Therefore, said the Catholics, the laity receive the body and blood of Christ even if the cup is withheld. The body is not without the blood, nor the blood without the body; therefore those that receive the bread receive both the body and blood. And the natural inference was that they who receive both bread and wine, receive both the body and the blood twice.

of Concord, but the first edition of the Apology, which differed materially from the original. Does this edition reject the doctrine of transubstantiation? It actually seems to confirm this doctrine.* The Apology claims not only to agree with the Roman church on the doctrine of Christ's presence in the eucharist, but also with the Greek church. To prove this agreement the prayer of the Greek priest at the consecration is referred to, "in which the priest prays distinctly, that the changed bread may become the body of Christ" (ut mutato pane ipsum corpus Christi fiat). To make this agreement still more evident Melanchthon quotes Vulgarius: "And Vulgarius, who is not regarded by us as a mean writer, says plainly, the bread is not merely a figure, but is truly changed into the flesh" (Et Vulgarius, scriptor ut nobis videtur non stultus, disertè inquit, *panem non tantum figuram esse, sed vere in carnem mutari*).† At the close of the article the reason for making these quotations is given, that it may be apparent that "we defend the doctrine held by the whole church, that in the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Christ are truly and essentially present with those things that are seen, bread and wine.‡"

* This is true especially of the Latin copy of the Apology. The German copy of the Apology in the Book of Concord is a translation from the Latin by Justus Jonas assisted by Melanchthon. The German, however, omits part of the Latin, and sometimes additions are made, so that in some respects the German differs materially from the Latin. The German does not seem to favor transubstantiation as much as the Latin. This is the reason that the English translation from the German is not so liable to the charge of favoring the Catholic doctrine as is the Latin.

† Hardenburg (Planck, *Gesch. d. Prot. Theol.* vol. II. part II. p. 205) says: "In the Apology still more is conceded than in the Confession. In it are quoted passages from Vulgarius and from the Greek canon of the mass, which in plain language teach transubstantiation." Hesshusen said (do. p. 332 note) the same of the Apology: "Simili modo et Apologiam in Articulo Cœnæ (Hesshusius) docuit esse Papisticam, nam Canonem Græcum transubstantiationem afferere aliquoties confessus est. . . . Coram pluribus damnavit phrasin et propositionem hanc: *panis est essentielle corpus Christi*."

‡ The enemies of the Lutherans made capital of this apparent sanction of the doctrine of transubstantiation. Salig. I. 379, says of this article in the Apology: "The Papists were elated, and said

Not only on the nature of the sacraments, but also on the nature of Christ's presence in the Supper, Zwingli differed materially from the Augsburg Confession, as well as from the doctrine of the Papists. In his confession he teaches, that in the Supper the body of Christ is present to the contemplation of faith; that is, by faith the communicant views the real body, the sufferings and death, of Christ.* He regards the doctrine, that Christ's body is essentially and really present, except to the faith of the communicant, as an error.

The Augsburg Confession and Zwingli's are thus in irreconcilable conflict on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The closing words of the 10th article in the former, ("the opposite doctrine is therefore rejected,") referred especially to the doctrine of Zwingli, which was thus explicitly condemned. And Zwingli in his confession virtually condemns the doctrine of the Augsburg Confession on this subject, since he denies the real presence, the distribution, and the eating and drinking of the real body and blood of Christ.

The Tetrapolitan confession (art. 18) states that its adherents "praise diligently the goodness of Christ towards his people, since to-day, just as in his last Supper, he designs to give really to his disciples, as often as they celebrate that Supper in the manner instituted by him, his true body and his true blood to be eaten and drank by them as food and drink for their souls, so that they may be strengthened unto

that Melancthon frequently contradicted himself, since he did not explicitly teach transubstantiation, but nevertheless approved of the quotations from the Greek canon and from Vulgarius. For without transubstantiation, writes Cochläus, Christ's body could not be essentially present. John Hofmeister therefore writes, that the Lutherans agree entirely with the Papists in the article on the holy Supper, unless they conceal a deceitful meaning under these words; therefore they have in this respect no opponents except the Sacramentarians and the Anabaptists. The Reformed too, especially Masson, have charged the Lutheran church, that in the article on the sacrament the Confession as well as the Apology had not departed from the papistical doctrine, since the Papists had recognized that article as correct."

* Whilst Luther taught that all the communicants received the real body and blood of Christ, Zwingli taught that believers only received Christ's body and blood in the Supper, and this reception is not with the mouth, but only by faith.

eternal life, so that he may live in them and they in him, and that at the last day they may be awakened through him to a new and eternal life, according to his words which are eternally true, 'Take, eat, this is my body; drink ye all of this, this cup is my blood.'" In the article a special effort is also made to refute the charge that they (the confessors) treated the sacrament with contempt, or celebrated it in an improper manner. It is stated that their preachers admonish the people to avoid all disputes and useless inquiries on the subject, and that they direct their attention to that which Christ alone regarded, namely, "that we are nourished by him, that in and through him we live holy and acceptable, and therefore eternal and blessed lives; and that we who partake of the same bread in the Supper, are all one body. Therefore the Lord's Supper is celebrated by us with the greatest reverence."

According to this Confession Christ's body and blood are really eaten and drunk as food for the soul. The article, which is lengthy, lacks distinctness. It teaches that in the Supper the communicants receive more than mere bread and wine. But how is more received? By the mouth, as Luther affirmed, or only by faith, as Zwingli affirmed? This question is left unanswered; and it is probable that the authors of the Confession were themselves as yet undecided on this point.* In writing the article on the Lord's Supper they seem to have been chiefly desirous of removing the impression so prevalent, that they treated the sacrament

* Salig, I. 411, in giving the difference between the Lutherans, Zwinglians, and the adherents of the Tetrapolitan confession (or the Highlanders, Oberländer, as he calls them) says: "Zwingli rejected the real presence of Christ; the Highlanders admitted it. Zwingli taught a spiritual eating and drinking by the soul, the Lutherans, besides this, an eating and drinking with the mouth also; and the Highlanders affirmed a real eating of the real body and blood of Christ. The Lutherans taught an essential presence, the Highlanders a real presence, and Zwingli a real, but only spiritual presence to the contemplation of faith. The Lutherans affirmed the eating with the mouth on the part of the unworthy and ungodly; Zwingli positively denied this; the Highlanders were still undecided. The Lutherans asserted the bodily presence of Christ with the external elements, bread and wine; Zwingli denied this; the Highlanders were still considering the matter."

with indifference, if not with levity. They were neither ready to go with Zwingli, nor with Luther, and therefore left the nature of Christ's presence in the Supper undecided.

Besides the Confessions presented at Augsburg a number of private documents were written during the diet, giving the views of different parties on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. These were prepared when an effort was made to unite all the Protestants on the Augsburg Confession. The most important of these documents were prepared by Melanchthon, and are of special importance, since they give us the views of the author of the Confession.* In these documents, which were merely of a private character, Melanchthon explicitly rejects the doctrine of transubstantiation. But he as distinctly rejects the Zwinglian view, that the body of Christ is present to our faith only, or that its presence in any wise depends on our faith. "We teach," he says, "that the body of Christ is truly and really present with the bread, or in the bread."† "Yet," he says, "we reject the view of those who say that the body is contained in the bread as wine in a vessel, or as fire in the red hot iron." Bucer therefore thought that he agreed with Luther and Melanchthon on this subject. He said of the Lutherans, you say "that the body of Christ is really present; but Luther does not say it is locally present, that is, in a given space, or that it is circumscribed;‡ but in the same manner as the person of Christ or the undivided Christ is present to all his creatures." Bucer thought that as Christ's body is necessarily confined to a certain space, it cannot be really present to those objects remote from that space; but that it can be present only in thought, or to faith. This reasoning Melanchthon rejected, because it rejected the doctrine of the real and essential presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Supper.

The different views of the nature of Christ's presence in the Supper had their foundation in different views of the

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 718, 720, 798, 799, 800, 864.

† "Nos docemus, quod corpus Christi vere et realiter adsit cum pane, vel in pane." Corp. Ref. II. No. 789.

‡ Tamen non dicit Lutherus adesse localiter, scilicet in aliqua mole, circumscriptione."

nature of Christ himself. Of this Luther and Melancthon were fully conscious. It was not mere obstinacy that induced them to defend their views so tenaciously. And however sincerely we may regret the divisions in the Protestant church, caused mainly by the difference on this subject; and however much we may deprecate the harshness with which the different parties at times treated each other; yet it is wrong to ascribe the unwillingness of Luther and Melancthon to regard the Zwinglians as brethren, to narrow-heartedness or to bigotry. These reformers were so firm on this point because they believed that they were defending the person of their Lord and Master. They regarded the Zwinglian doctrine as far more erroneous and dangerous than that of the Papists on this subject.*

Our conception of the presence of Christ in the Supper depends on our view of the union of his divine and human natures. If Zwingli's doctrine was true, then the divine and human in Christ were not inseparably united; for whilst according to his divine nature he was everywhere present, his body, it was said, was only in heaven. His two natures were thus divided; ubiquity was ascribed to the divine, but not to the human.

Luther taught that these two natures are inseparable; and consequently, that where one is there must the other be also. That Christ's body is ubiquitous was first taught by him in a work published in 1527 against the Sacramentari-

*It is well known that Luther opposed the Zwinglian view of the Lord's Supper with much more harshness and bitterness than that of the Papists. In 1523 he published a book on "The adoration of the Sacrament of the holy body of Christ," in which he says: "The third error (of the Papists) is, that in the sacrament no bread remains, but only the form of bread. But this error is of little significance, if only Christ's body and blood, and his word are left there." Weber, II. 409. ("Doch an diessem Yrthumb nicht gross gelegen ist wenn nur Christus leyb und blut sampt dem Wort da gelassen wirt.") In 1528 Luther wrote a confession on the Lord's Supper, in which he says: "I have often declared that I will not enter into any dispute as to whether wine remains (in the Supper) or not. It is enough for me that Christ's blood is present, let become of the wine whatever God wills. Yes, rather than have mere wine with the fanatics (Zwinglians), I would have mere blood with the Papists." Planck, III. 118, note.

ans, in which he argues that Christ's body is at the right hand of God; but this right hand of God is everywhere; consequently Christ's body and blood are everywhere present.* And the real presence of these, he argues, is in the Supper without the change of the substance of bread and wine. This doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body was not embodied in the creeds of the Church till the adoption of the Formula of Concord; it was, however, frequently resorted to by Lutherans in the discussion of the Lord's Supper. But Luther not only defended this doctrine by his view of "the right hand of God," but from the very nature of Christ himself. He held that the divine and human are inseparable, as stated above. The properties of the one are communicated to the other. The germs of the reasoning on this subject, adopted in the Formula of Concord, are thus found in Luther's works. In a letter to Francis Gros in 1541 he says, that it may be said of Christ that his divine nature, on account of its inseparable union with the human, has passed through all the processes of human nature, that it was born, suffered, died, etc., etc.† Here the doctrine, that the properties of the one nature of Christ are also communicated to the other (*communicatio idiomatum*), on which the Formula of Concord lays so much stress, is clearly taught; only Luther argues that the properties of the human are communicated to the divine, whilst in the Formula of Concord the properties of the divine are attributed to the human, for the purpose of establishing the doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body.

* Heppe—"Confess. Entwickl. d. altprotest. Kirche" p. 16. Luther says: "Christi Leib ist zur Rechten Gottes. Die Rechte Gottes ist aber an allen Enden. . . Wo nun die rechte Hand Gottes ist, da muss auch Christi Leib und Blut sein."

† The letter is found in De Wette, part 6, page 292-294. He is discussing the question, whether it can be said of Christ that his divine nature died as well as the human. He says: "Et quamquam mori sit alienum a natura Dei, tamen, quia natura divina sic induit naturam humanam, ut inseparabiliter conjunctæ sint hæ duæ naturæ, ita ut Christus sit una persona Deus et homo, ut quidquid accidat Deo et homini: ideo fit, ut hæ duæ naturæ in Christo sua idiomatica inter se communicent, h. e. quod unius naturæ proprium, communicatur quoque alteri propter inseparabilem cohærentiam, ut nasci, pati, mori et cet., sunt humanæ naturæ idiomatica seu proprietates, quarum divina natura quoque fit particeps propter inseparabilem illam et tantum fide comprehensibilem conjunctionem."

At Augsburg Melanchthon, in opposing the union proposed by Bucer, used arguments similar to those of Luther to prove the ubiquity of Christ's body. He opposes the doctrine that each nature in Christ retains its peculiar qualities, according to which doctrine Christ's body is confined to one place.* And Melanchthon carefully guards against the error of Nestorius, who attributed two persons to Christ thus making it possible to separate the human from the divine. Melanchthon argues that in the Supper there is not only the body of Christ, but also His divinity. He therefore says: "We say that the undivided Christ is in the sacrament, lest any one should suspect us of dividing the natures, or of affirming that there are two persons in Christ."†

The difference between Melanchthon and Bucer was therefore radical, not superficial. Their views affected the person of Christ, and not merely the Lord's Supper. The Papists held a view of Christ's person, according to which it was impossible for Him to be essentially present in the Supper unless God by his almighty power changed the substance of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. Whenever the elements were consecrated God performed this miracle. The Lutherans taught that without such a miracle Christ's body and blood are really and essentially present, because of their inseparable union with His divine nature. In the person of Christ there are two natures; in the Supper Christ is present, therefore both natures are also present, and the one just as really as the other. The Zwinglians saw no reason why the divine attribute of ubiquity should be attributed to Christ's body any more than the bodily attribute of locality should be attributed to His divine nature; and consequently they taught that Christ's body is really present only to the eye

* Corp. Ref. II. No. 799. Here Melanchthon refers to the doctrine of the communication of the properties of one nature to the other, though he is not as explicit as Luther in the letter referred to above. But here too are found germs of the doctrine afterwards developed in the Formula of Concord. And in this same document Melanchthon, like Luther, refers to the sitting of Christ at the right hand of God as proof of the ubiquity of His body.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 800.

of faith. And they could not understand how that, which had lost locality, the property of a body, could still be called a real body. Bucer therefore thought that, though different words were used, his views and those of Luther and Melanchthon must really be alike. But they rejected his views because he taught that Christ was really present to the soul only, to faith, and not to the mouth. And when in 1535 Melanchthon and Bucer met in Cassel with a view of coming to an agreement on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, Luther gave Melanchthon instructions for this interview, in which he states: * "This is our view, that truly in and with the bread the body of Christ is eaten; also, that everything which the bread effects and suffers, the body of Christ also effects and suffers, that it is distributed, eaten, and masticated with the teeth." Here Luther gives what Bucer must believe before he can be regarded as sound on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. And if they had adopted these views at Augsburg, he and the other adherents of the Tetrapolitan might have been signers of the Augsburg Confession.†

* Salig. I. 416. Heppe, *Confessio. Entw.* p. 17-18.

† Between the views of Luther and Zwingli the adherents of the Tetrapolitan confession vacillated, adopting something of each, but declaring positively in favor of neither. The other view of the Lord's Supper which gained many advocates, also lies between the views of these two reformers—the view of Calvin. At first it was thought that he agreed with Luther; but in 1557 he, in connection with Farel, prepared a confession of faith in which he gives a view of the eucharist different from that of Luther as well as that of Zwingli. He teaches (Salig. I. 438): "That Christ makes us partakers of his living flesh; that we are made partakers of the flesh and blood of Christ as much as of his spirit, so that we may receive Christ entire and all that belongs to Him, since the Scriptures declare that Christ's flesh is meat indeed and his blood is real drink, by means of which we are sustained and nourished. Our communion with the body of Christ is a glorious mystery. The bodily presence in a certain place is not necessary for this mystery of the true communion. The power of the Holy Spirit produces the communion and reception of the body and blood of Christ without the limits of space, in such a manner, however, that the Holy Spirit truly nourishes us with the substance of the Lord's flesh and blood unto eternal life, and through their reception vivifies those who use and receive the sacrament with the proper spirit and in the manner in which it was instituted by Christ."



CHAPTER X.

MELANCHTHON'S ALTERATIONS OF THE CONFESSION.

THROUGHOUT Europe, among Papists as well as Protestantists, there was a great desire to obtain the Augsburg Confession. The emperor, however, drew from the confessors the promise not to publish it without his consent, naturally fearing that its publication might spread its doctrines still more widely. But by some means a manuscript was secured by a printer who published it, contrary to the knowledge and wishes of the confessors. This first edition is without the names of the publisher and place of publication; its dialect, however, indicates that it was published in Switzerland. This edition was published soon after the presentation of the Confession, and copies of it appeared in Augsburg before the dissolution of the diet.* It was, however, very imperfect, being full of typographical errors. Besides this, five other German editions and one Latin were published without the consent of the confessors. All these were very defective, being probably printed from some manuscript prepared some time before the Confession was finished. They were therefore calculated to give an erroneous impression of the Confession. To counteract this evil, Melancthon published an edition of the Confession in German and Latin with the Apology.† The Confession, being

* Cochlæus (quoted by Dantz, p. 85) says: "Lutheranorum Confessio per typographos divulgata fuit et typis excusa Augustam venit, antequam solveretur Principum Conventus." On the various editions of the Confession Weber's *Kritische Geschichte* is the most valuable work; Salig. I. 469 and 696 is also valuable.

† The title was as follows: "Confessio fidei exhibita invictiss. imp. Carolo V. Cæsari Augusto, in comitiis Augustæ, anno MDXXX.

printed before the Apology, appeared in 1530; but the Confession with the Apology appeared in 1531. This is by far the most important edition of the Confession, and is commonly called the "Editio princeps." It is generally cited as the quarto edition of 1531, to distinguish it from an octavo edition which was published in the same year. In the Latin preface to this first edition of the Confession by Melanchthon, he states that the edition was prepared from a trustworthy copy ("exemplar bonæ fidei"). But it is not known whether this refers only to the Latin or also to the German copy.* Nor can it by any means be determined how nearly this edition agrees with the copies presented to the emperor. These were beyond the reach of the Protestants, being in the emperor's possession. Of the Latin Confession no exact copy was retained by the confessors; for when the emperor ordered the presentation of the Confession, so little time was left the confessors that they could not copy the Latin into a plain and clear hand, but were necessitated to present Melanchthon's copy with all its blurs, its erasures, and additions. The German Confession was rewritten in a plain hand before presentation; but

Addita est Apologia confessionis. Beide, deutsch und latiniſch. Psalm, 119. Et loquebar de testimoniis tuis in conspectu Regum, et non confundebar. Wittenbergæ MDXXX." This is the title of the entire book containing the Latin and German Confession and the Apology. At the end of the book are these words: "Gedruckt zu Wittenberg, durch Georgen Rhaw, MDXXXI." That is, the whole book was not finished till 1531. Though the Confession appeared in a separate form in 1530, as the whole was not completed till 1531, it is generally quoted as the Confession published in 1531.

* Müller, in the Introduction to the Book of Concord p. LXVI, thinks this remark of Melanchthon refers only to the Latin, in which he made little alteration before publication. But Müller charges him with making considerable alteration in the German copy even before the first edition was published. "The German text, however, was not only changed considerably by Melanchthon in reference to the words and their location, but the twentieth, twenty-seventh, and twenty-eighth articles were almost entirely remodeled." "Melanchthon himself says, that the counsellors had prevented him from making any more alterations; he must therefore have had in readiness alterations which he was not permitted to use; but he no doubt used the first opportunity to apply them, and this was the publication of the Confession."

what alterations may have been made in rewriting it, is unknown. Nor is it known whether Melanchthon may not have made alterations in the copies in his possession before he published them. The authors of the Book of Concord at least rejected the German copy in Melanchthon's first edition, and published in that Book a copy from a manuscript, which was at first thought to be the original Augsburg Confession, but which has since been proved spurious and without any claims to authenticity. But whilst it cannot be decided in how far the Latin and German Confession in the first edition corresponds with the original, the probability is that of all the editions ever published this comes nearest the original.*

So great was the demand that the first edition was soon exhausted. In the year 1531 Melanchthon accordingly published a second edition, in octavo. Already in this edition there were a number of alterations or improvements, especially in the article on justification. To this edition of the Confession the Apology was also added; but in it the alterations were still more numerous than in the Confession. These alterations were not, however, such as to excite much comment.†

In 1533, Melanchthon published a German edition with considerable alterations. The sixth article is nearly as long again as in the first edition. The principal changes

* Not only was Melanchthon charged with altering the German copy before publication so as to make it altogether unreliable, but the same charge was made in reference to his first edition of the Latin. It was claimed that by him it was altered and debased (*verändert und verfälscht*). *Bertram*, *Beytrag zur critischen Geschichte der Augs. Con.* p. 45-46. Efforts were accordingly made to find some Latin manuscripts which would give the original, or at least would come nearer it. A number of manuscripts have carefully been examined and collated; but no manuscript, either Latin or German, that has yet been found, can be relied on as more authentic than the first edition of Melanchthon.

† Wigand (*Mueller Introd.* p. LXVIII.) says of this second edition: "Afterwards, but in the same year, yet another edition appeared in octavo, which Melanchthon, on his own responsibility, without consulting others, undertook to change in some places, introducing good as well as injurious alterations." But this was written more than for 7 years afterwards. At the time the changes were made they occasioned no offence.

were made in articles 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 15, and 20.* Before 1540, other editions, both Latin and German, were published, the last edition always differing from the preceding.† These alterations were generally regarded as improvements, which were calculated to place the doctrines in a clearer light and to fortify them. But in 1540, Melanchthon published an edition of the Confession in Latin, which afterwards became the source of much contention in the Lutheran church. It is this edition which gave rise to the term, the *altered* Augsburg Confession, by which it is generally designated. In it the order of some of the articles was changed, some of the articles themselves were altered, and articles 4, 5, 6, 18, 20, and 21 were considerably enlarged. But by far the most important alteration was made in the 10th article, and it is owing to the changes in this article that the edition is commonly called the altered Confession. In the first edition this article reads as follows: "Concerning the Lord's Supper, they teach, that the body and blood of Christ are truly present and distributed to those eating in the Lord's Supper; and they reject those teaching otherwise."‡ In the edition of 1540, the article reads: "Concerning the Lord's Supper, they teach that with the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ are truly exhibited in the Lord's Supper to those eating."§ This change was evidently not merely verbal, but also material. The real presence and distribution of the body and blood of Christ are no longer affirmed here, as in the first edition; but it is merely stated that they are represented or exhibited to the communicants with the bread and wine. And the clause which condemned the Zwinglian view was altogether omitted.

* Weber II. 59.

† Salig. I. 698, states that Forer, a Jesuit, had one of the first editions of the German Confession republished at Nuremberg. Forer claimed that the edition had been carefully compared with the original of the Confession in the archives at Mentz, and stated that not a page, scarcely a line, agreed with the original.

‡ "De cœna Domini docent, quod corpus et sanguis Christi vere adsint et distribuuntur vescentibus in cœna Domini; et improbant secus docentes."

§ De cœna Domini docent, quod cum pane et vino vere exhibeantur corpus et sanguis Christi vescentibus in cœna Domini."

In the same year, 1540, a new German edition was published, but in it and in all succeeding German editions, though alterations were constantly made in various other articles, the 10th article was never changed. In 1542, Melancthon published another Latin edition in which a number of alterations were made, especially in the twenty first article; but in this and the subsequent Latin editions of Melancthon, the 10th article remained as in the edition of 1540.

From all the facts in the case it is evident that Melancthon took the greatest liberty with the Confession, making as many alterations as he pleased.* It was his custom to improve his works constantly, so that every new edition might be an improved one. The Confession he treated just as he did all his other works, omitting, adding and altering as his own mind progressed in the truth, or as he thought the Confession itself needed the changes. And of the numerous editions, both Latin and German, published by him, no two are alike. His mind was progressive. He was not idle during the thirty years after writing the Confession. And he was anxious to impart the new light he gained, and the progress he made in the truth, to the Confession. And the more important the document, the more highly he prized it, and the greater its mission, the more necessary it was to make it as perfect as possible.

But had Melancthon a right to alter the Confession? Some have denied this right and have blamed him severely for his alterations, whilst others claim that he had a perfect right to alter the Confession.

The original Confession was no longer in the hands of the confessors, nor exact copies of the same. Therefore, even if they had desired to do so, it would have been impossible for them to have published the original Confession. If the Confession was to be published at all, a copy varying somewhat from the original must be published, as no other alternative was left the confessors.† The question there-

* Appendix F.

† Strictly speaking, only that can be regarded as the Augsburg Confession which the confessors signed, and which was presented to the emperor. A copy altered in the least is no longer the Augsburg Confession, but is either more or less. The subsequent alterations, in so far as they were additions, were not confessed at Augsburg;

fore cannot be, whether Melanchthon had the right to publish anything else than the original? for he had no other alternative left him, if he published at all. It is generally acknowledged that he altered the manuscripts still in his hands, before publication; and it might be asked whether he had a right to do this? whether he ought not to have published an edition as nearly like the original as possible for him to do? But Melanchthon has been blamed chiefly for the alterations made after the first edition was issued; and the principal question is, had he a right to make these?

At Augsburg the Confession failed to accomplish its end. So far was the diet from giving it an official sanction, that it declared the Confession refuted, and demanded of the confessors to abandon it. Nothing in fact that transpired at Augsburg bound the confessors to the very letter of the Confession. Hence an exact copy of the original was not necessary for the Protestants. The publication of the Confession was, therefore, not at all intended to teach the Protestants what they believed and what they must believe; it was not published as the standard of their faith which they could not desert without deserting their cause. The fact is, it was not published officially at all by any secular or ecclesiastical authority. The publication of the first edition was left entirely to Melanchthon. It was altogether a private affair, and he alone was responsible. And every subsequent edition by Melanchthon was viewed in the same light, for which reason he was allowed to make the alterations he pleased. The alterations were just as official as the editions themselves. Both were simply regarded as the work of Melanchthon.

There was nothing clandestine in the conduct of Melanch-

and if the alterations are omissions, then something was confessed at Augsburg which is omitted in the altered Confession. Judged by this standard we should have to say that the Augsburg Confession has never been printed, and that its very existence is doubtful. Every known copy in all probability varies from the original; at least if any is an exact copy of the original, it is not known which it is, simply because there is no original copy known with which to compare it. It is useless to ask which is the original Confession? All we can do is to ask, which probably comes nearest the original?

thon in this affair. He wrote to his friends on the subject, and consulted his friends at Wittenberg.* And then, these alterations being published, were open to the inspection of the world. The fact that Melanchthon published altered editions surely did not force these editions on any one, nor give them and their alterations any special authority. Any confessor, or prince, or ecclesiastical authority might have published a standard edition without the alterations, had this been found desirable. The very fact that it was not done, shows that Melanchthon's course was not regarded as a violation of good faith, or as an arrogation of undue authority.

Had the Confession been regarded in the same light as was done by some after the Reformation, namely as a binding authority, then Melanchthon would have been very culpable for his alterations. But had that Romish view of the Confession prevailed then, his alterations would either have been prevented altogether, or their effect would have been destroyed by the publication of a standard edition whose authority was binding. But that Romish view arose after the Reformation, and with it also arose and grew the opposition to Melanchthon on account of his alterations.†

It was nothing at all unusual in those days to alter the various editions of works which had acquired an important historical significance, since no special, or at least no binding authority was attached to them. These documents were generally looked upon as arguments for the party setting them forth; and they thought it proper to change

* "In his letters to his friends he speaks quite frankly of his proceedings with reference to the Confession and the Apology, and he generally designated the paraphrased or further developed editions plainly as such on the title page, by the addition of the words 'diligently improved'—"mit Vleis emendirt," "diligenter recognita." Scheidler, d. Augsb. Confess. p. 57.

† Why do not those who lament so much the alterations of Melanchthon in the different editions, find fault with him and the Confessors for preparing and presenting at Augsburg a German and a Latin Confession which differ considerably, especially in articles 10, 20, 27 and 28, certainly more than do some editions of the Confession? If they want sameness, why not be consistent, and demand it in one instance as much as in another?

those documents, if by so doing they could make their arguments stronger and clearer. The Papists took the liberty of changing their Confutation of the Confession, presented to the diet and adopted by it, in its various editions, so that we have an altered Confutation as well as Confession.*

The first apology of the Confession was based on notes hastily taken during the reading of the Confutation, against which it was aimed, and was necessarily imperfect. Yet this was offered to the emperor. Fœrstemann† however thinks that this Apology properly belongs to the symbolical books. It is the original Apology. But immediately after its refusal, Melancthon commenced to alter and improve it.‡ Having in the meanwhile secured a copy of the Confutation, he was able to make the Apology much stronger. All winter he worked at it, and had it published the next spring, April, 1531. But the published Apology is entirely different from the original, so that it cannot at all be called the same work. Nor did Melancthon cease his alterations after that, but continued to make still more alterations in the Apology as well as in the Confession.§ Yet Melancthon is not blamed for making the first edition of the Apology much stronger than the copy he offered the emperor; and yet that first edition differed more from the original, the Augsburg Apology, than any two successive

* *Schæpf*: *Widerlegung d. Augs. Con.* p. 11. *Mueller*, *Introduct.* p. LXXXII. Note. Fœrstemann II. p. 142, quotes *Mueller's* *Einleitung* to the Confutation published by him, in which he says: "Erat ergo etiam theologis Pontificiis confutatio variata et mutata, sicut Lutheranis variata Aug. Confessio, nec habebant sane, quod tam tragicos ederent clamores et tanta linguæ intemperantia contra Melancthonem ejusque mutatam confessionem furerent."

† Fœrstemann II. 530. He gives the first draft of the Apology as it was offered to the emperor, in Latin p. 485, in German 581. .

‡ The 22nd of September the Apology was offered to the emperor, and already the next day Melancthon was improving it. At Altenburg he worked at it on Sunday, when Luther told him to desist, and snatched the pen from his hand. *Matthes Symbolik*, p. 79.

§ Before me lies Melancthon's German edition of the Confession and Apology of 1540. On the title page are these words: "Apologia der Confessio, mit Vleis emendirt"—Apology of the Confession diligently improved. Melancthon wrote the Apology in Latin only; the German is a translation by Justus Jonas, assisted by Melancthon.

editions of the Confession differ. More than this, the very men who after his death blamed him most for altering the Confession, ascribed to this altered Apology symbolical authority, whilst the original was not even honored by them with publication; for in the Book of Concord we have not the original Augsburg Apology, but the altered one, the first edition of Melanchthon. Now, if Melanchthon was culpable for altering the Confession after he got more light, was he not equally culpable for altering the Apology of that Confession after he got the papal Confutation?

The Smalcald Articles prepared by Luther, were adopted at the convention of Protestants at Smalcald in 1537 and were signed by the theologians present, in accordance with the wishes of their princes.* The pope had ordered the convening of a council at Mantua on the 23rd of May that year, and for this council the articles were prepared.† They were not, however, used for their intended purpose. The next year Luther published the articles, but not as originally adopted and signed. He took the liberty of making many alterations, by omitting some passages and adding others;‡ and he also continued to make more alterations in the succeeding editions. We therefore have altered Smalcald Articles as well as an altered Confession; and yet Luther

* A copy of these articles written by Spalatin and found in the archives at Weimar, contains the signatures of Luther and thirty-five other theologians. Seckendorf, 1592.

† The elector of Saxony requested Luther to prepare articles for the council "for the purpose of showing what and in how far we shall or can yield to the Papists, and what we intend to adhere to." This is Luther's own account of the elector's request. Seckendorf 1589. Melanchthon, writing to Camerarius about the object of the convention, says, that the question was to be considered, what articles must at all hazards be maintained and which ones might be yielded to the pope and the bishops, for the sake of peace and agreement. Seckendorf, 1592. The elector, Luther, and Melanchthon did not, therefore, look upon that convention as having for its object the adoption of articles to be of binding authority for the church. And it must remain a mystery how any one could ever think of making articles intended as a basis of peace and union negotiations with the Papists, authoritative and absolutely binding on Lutherans, unless they were adopted by both parties and thus made obligatory on both by some treaty of peace.

‡ Weber II. 294. Heppe, *Confessionelle Entwicklung*, 111.

was not censured for these alterations, not even by those who wanted the Smalcald Articles to be authoritative in the Church.

What was the object of Melanchthon in altering the Confession? Melanchthon prepared the Confession in a strange place, away from his quiet study and his books, and in the midst of much excitement. He was often greatly perplexed with doubts and anxieties, fearing lest the object aimed at might not be reached. In the hope that the Papists would accept it he made the Confession as mild as possible.* He was not allowed at Augsburg to make the Confession what he wanted it to be.† The Confession being rejected by the diet, no official obligation rested on the confessors to abide by the Confession just as presented. Indeed, its rejection by the diet, and the repeated demands of the emperor that they should abandon it, freed them from all official obligations to abide by it. Had the diet accepted it, then both parties might have been bound by it as a covenant. The different versions and translations in different countries were all calculated to spread the truths of Scripture, just as every other dogmatic work based on the Gospel. But Melanchthon was desirous of making the Confession as perfect as possible, by removing its imperfections, explaining all doubtful terms, and altering whatever he thought might make an erroneous impression. His conferences and disputes with the most learned Papists, a careful review of the various subjects discussed in the Confession, a more thorough study of the Scriptures and the Fathers, the reading of the Confutation, and his various other studies, gave him new light and clearer ideas on some of the articles, showed him what points in the Confession were most liable to misinterpretation and perversion, and what points could be made clearer and stronger. At Wittenberg, in his own study, far removed from the excitement and harassing cares of Augsburg, with the heroic Luther at his side, he no longer labored to make the Confession as little offensive as possible to the opponents, but to make it a clearer exhibition and stronger defence of the doctrines of Scripture. The author

* Introduction to Apology.

† Letter to Camerarius, June 26th, 1530.

of the Confession, who understood his work better than others did, knew full well that it was not perfect. He thought it was susceptible of improvement, and accordingly altered it to improve it. "As a comparison of the successive editions with the manuscripts of the Confession will show, Melanchthon, as we have already observed, was constantly striving to establish more firmly the Evangelical doctrines and especially to indicate more and more clearly the difference between the Lutheran and the Romish Church."*

Some of the statements in the Confession were of such a nature that the enemies of the Reformation could quote them against the Protestants with more force than the latter could against the former, and this was actually done to the great detriment of Evangelical Christianity. To say that an article *could* be interpreted favorably to the Protestants, did not remedy the matter, so long as it also admitted an interpretation against them. The natural interpretation was, in some instances, very unfavorable to the Protestants; and Melanchthon was too honest to interpret *into* the Confession doctrines which could not fairly be interpreted from it, as some modern interpreters have done. A careful study of the disputes of those times will show the necessity of altering some of the expressions originally used. A striking illustration of this necessity was given at the second colloquy at Worms between the Papists and Protestants, in 1557.† The question arose, what authority shall decide the questions in dispute? The Protestants denying the infallibility of the decisions of popes and councils, refused to be governed by them in the colloquy. In the fourth session the Papists therefore claimed, that on all disputed passages of Scripture the interpretations of the fathers should be decisive. To this, they thought, the Protestants ought to agree, because they stated in their Confession that they did not differ from the Catholic, nor from the Roman church "so far as could be learned from the writings of the fathers."‡ Any one can see that the natural

* Müller, Book of Concord. Introduction, p. LXXII. See also Rudelbach p. 103. Heppe Confessionelle Entw. p. 110.

† Salig. III. 307, Weber, II. 382.

‡ Epilogue to the doctrinal articles. Here it is distinctly stated

signification of these words, as well as the interpretation put on them by the Papists, required the Protestants to adopt all the views held by the Romish church, however erroneous they might be, if these views received any authority from any of the fathers. To abide by this rule, laid down in the Confession, would have been very injurious to the Lutherans, if not fatal to their cause. This fact Melancthon, and the other Protestants present at the colloquy, knew full well. Nor did they attempt by perverted interpretation to avoid the legitimate conclusion drawn by their enemies from these words. But in their reply Oct. 7th they objected to the reference of the Papists to the language of the Confession, because they quoted the original, and not the improved edition, which improved edition, the Protestants claimed, gave their real idea.* This appeal of the Protestants from the original to the improved edition, was admitted by their adversaries, and saved them from a serious difficulty.

As already indicated, the alteration of the 10th article was by far the most important. What were Melancthon's

that the doctrinal articles of the Confession are based on the Scriptures, and are not contrary to the universal Christian church, nor even to the Romish church, so far as could be learned from the writings of the fathers—"So viel aus der Väter Schrift zu vermerken;" "quatenus ex scriptoribus nota est."

Whoever adopts the Augsburg Confession unconditionally, must also adopt this Epilogue and say, that the doctrines of the Confession agree with the Romish church of 1530 doctrinally, so far as those doctrines are confirmed by the fathers. But it is well known that the germs of some of the errors of the papacy are found in the fathers, which must consequently be adopted. The fact is, that the unconditional adoption of the Confession would, according to this single clause in the Epilogue, lead one into inextricable difficulties. Of this the Papists were aware, and hence they insisted that the Protestants should follow, during the colloquy, this declaration to its necessary consequences.

* The reply of the Protestants was: "Quod obijciunt in confessione nostra dici, nos nec a Romana Ecclesia dissentire, mutilatam sententiam recitant. Est enim adjecta restrictio, ut ostendunt emendata exempla, quatenus ex probatis Scriptoribus nota est." According to the improved edition of the Confession the Protestants therefore declared their agreement with the Romish church only in so far as the doctrines of that church were confirmed by the approved writings of the fathers.

reasons for changing so materially that article? His frequent contact with Bucer and the Swiss theologians, in their efforts to form a more intimate union among all Protestants, gave him a better idea of their views, and convinced him that the differences on the Lord's Supper were not such as to keep the church divided. The renewed study of the Scriptures and the fathers had the effect of moderating his views on this subject. He was convinced that their violent disputes had led both the Lutherans and Zwinglians into extremes. So far was he from regarding that doctrine definitely settled in 1530, and so little was he satisfied with the manner in which it was then taught, that he says in a letter written to Veit Diedrich shortly before the altered Confession of 1540 was published, that for ten years no night had passed that he had not revolved in his mind the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.* Whether he really abandoned Luther's view of the Supper or not, it is certain that he no longer felt justified in denying the right hand of fellowship to the Zwinglians.

In 1536, a formula of concord was adopted by Lutherans and Zwinglians, which was really a compromise with those who could not adopt Luther's views on the Lord's Supper. According to this formula the 10th article was so explained that Bucer and his adherents could sign it. The words "improbant secus docentes," ("they reject those teaching otherwise") were omitted in this formula, thus virtually dropping them from the Confession; and when Philip of Hesse heard of the concord, he is said to have erased these words from the Confession. This formula was signed by Luther, Melanchthon, and other theologians of both parties. And when in 1540 Melanchthon was suddenly taken dangerously ill at Weimar he, in view of death, made a confession of his views on the Lord's Supper in which he did not base his faith on the 10th article of the Confession, but he declared his adherence to the formula of concord made in 1536, at Wittenberg.† In the same year, 1540, he published the Confession with the 10th article altered. But by means of this alteration he did not make the Con-

* Salig, I. 481.

† Salig, I. 476.

fession Zwinglian on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, as is clearly proved by articles 5 and 13, in the same edition. The formula of concord of 1536, and the union with Bucer, Capito, and their adherents, seemed to require the alteration of the 10th article, so far at least as to strike out the condemnatory clause, which referred specially to the Zwinglians. The other words in this article, which were changed by Melanchthon, had been the occasion of much offence to the very persons with whom the Lutherans now entered into a union, and the concord seemed also to demand their alteration.*

But Melanchthon had another reason for changing the 10th article. The original language of the Confession could be quoted in favor of transubstantiation as well as in favor of the Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper.† And the Papists did not fail to use this article to the injury of the Protestants.‡ When the first edition of the Confession is examined in connection with the Apology, it will be found difficult to defend the Confession against the charge of teaching the Romish doctrine. So the Papists understood

* Rudelbach, 100.

† See the preceding chapter, on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper at Augsburg, where this subject is more fully discussed.

‡ "The Papists, who saw in the 10th article nothing that was opposed to their view of the Lord's Supper, were bold enough to designate every more explicit and more complete development of the Protestant dogma of the Lord's Supper, as a violation of the Augsburg Confession." Heppe, *Confess. Entw.* p. 110. "The words 'under the form of bread and wine' could be interpreted as if the Evangelical party accepted a so-called transubstantiation, and perhaps the Papists so understood it, since they found no objection at all to this 10th article in their Confutation, which would surely not have been the case if they had not believed that they agreed perfectly with the Evangelical party in this respect." Scheidler d. *Augsb. Confess.* 56. Planck, *Gesch. d. prot. Lehrb.*, vol. IV. p. 15, thinks the Papists at Augsburg were justified in understanding the 10th art. of the Confession to teach their doctrine, and that they approved of this article because they understood it thus. And for this reason, he thinks, Eck at the colloquy at Worms in 1541 immediately discovered the alteration of this article, since the altered edition rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation; and that he opposed the altered edition because it no longer favored the Romish doctrine.

it, and also the Zwinglians, and some of the Lutherans themselves. At the assembly of the Lutheran princes at Naumburg one of the questions proposed for consideration to the assembly was this: Whether the 10th article of the original Confession does not teach the doctrine of transubstantiation? — a question which would not have been proposed if the Confession had clearly rejected that Romish doctrine, or if the Lutherans had firmly and universally believed that it rejected that doctrine.* And when the Preface to the Book of Concord was sent to the landgrave William of Cassel, for his signature, he stated that he regretted that the *improved* Confession was called *altered*, and gave his reasons for not signing the document. He however stated that he expected to abide by the Confession of 1530, but without approving the doctrine of transubstantiation.† Hesshusen, the champion of orthodox Lutheranism and the bitter opponent of the Zwinglians and the altered Confession, declared at Heidelberg, that the words “under the form of bread and wine, etc., etc.,” in the 10th article of the Confession, and also the Apology on the same, taught the papistical doctrine of transubstantiation.‡ Thus, whatever may be the doctrine of the original 10th article, there were Lutherans, Zwinglians, and Papists, who believed it to teach the Romish doctrine. In 1540 Melancthon so altered the Confession as to free it entirely from that charge, and thus made the greatest of all improvements in the Confession, for which he deserves great praise, instead of the blame heaped on him by so many.

It is true that errorists during and after the Reformation, appealed to the altered Confession; but this was owing to the fact that the altered Confession was the one generally used. Had the original been in use they would probably have appealed to that. And the fact that they appealed to

* Heppe, *Gesch. d. deuts. Prot.* I. 383. II. 98.

† Cyprian 146. “*Citra approbationem transubstantiationis papisticæ.*”

‡ Salig, III. 439: “Er predigt öffentlich: ‘Die Redensart, unter Gestalt des Brodts und Weins wäre papistisch, und die Apologie der Augspurgischen Confession wäre eben so, weil sie sich auf den griechischen Canon, der doch die Brotverwandlung behauptete, beriefe.’” Planck, *Prot. Theol.* vol II. part II. p. 332, note.

the altered Confession, is no just ground for rejecting that Confession, any more than there is reason for rejecting the Scriptures, to which they also appealed. And the original edition has been appealed to by errorists as well as the altered editions. The charge that Melanchthon altered the Confession to accommodate its teachings to the errorists, had its origin in hatred of Melanchthon and in the desire to make him and his alterations odious.

It remains now to be seen how these changes in the Confession were received.

When these alterations were made, no objections were urged against them by the Lutherans.* No impediment was placed in Melanchthon's way, nor have we any evidence that during his lifetime he was ever censured for making the alterations. But after Melanchthon's death, when it had become fashionable to decry him, and when men legitimated their claims to orthodoxy by abusing him, then it became common, especially among his bitter personal enemies, to circulate the report that he had made the alterations, not only without the knowledge of Luther and the confessors, but also against their wishes.† The elector of Saxony, John Frederick, is particularly referred to as having found fault with Melanchthon for making these changes, and as having complained to Luther about the matter. The document, on which this report is founded, may be seen in Cyprian, p. 162. It seems that some person or persons had charged Melanchthon with changing his views so that he differed from Luther, and also that he had made the Confession milder, without the knowledge of the elector and the other signers. The elector wanted the views of Luther and Bugenhagen on the subject, to see whether the charges were true? Bruck, the chancellor, was sent to confer privately with them on the subject. The document itself, which gives us all the information we have on this subject, is simply an inquiry into the matter. It

* This Mueller acknowledges, Introduction LXXI., who states that the Lutheran church made no distinction between the different editions of the Confession until Crypto-Calvinism appealed to the altered Confession, which was not, however, till after the Reformation. Planck. Gesch. d. Prot. Theol. IV. p. 17, 22.

† Planck, do. p. 18, note.

contains no censure of Melanchthon; but the elector is anxious to know whether the charge, that Melanchthon was promulgating false doctrines, was true? What answer Luther and Bugenhagen gave the elector, is not known. In the correspondence and works of Luther and Melanchthon the matter is not at all referred to. In all probability Melanchthon did not at all learn of the elector's inquiry, as the whole matter was conducted in secret. But the very fact that the elector, Luther, and Bugenhagen investigated the matter, and neither blamed Melanchthon, nor checked him in his alterations, nor made any effort to restore and publish the original Confession, is strong presumptive evidence that they approved of the course pursued by Melanchthon. And it is a matter of surprise, how on the document referred to, can be based the report that the elector of Saxony was opposed to the alterations of Melanchthon, since it was merely an inquiry into the matter.*

The enemies of Melanchthon and the opposers of the altered Confession have always been anxious to prove that Luther was much displeased with Melanchthon's altera-

* It was on the 5th of May, 1537, that the elector sent the communication to Luther and Bugenhagen, some years before Melanchthon published the alterations which afterwards created so much disturbance. Can any one believe that, if there had been any real objection to his course, Melanchthon would have been permitted to make the change in 1540 without any opposition? The document shows that the elector was anxious to keep the Confession from teaching error. His fears may easily be accounted for. Cordatus as well as others attacked Melanchthon severely, charging him with teaching that good works are necessary to salvation. And as in the communication referred to, the elector says, that he had heard that Melanchthon on the doctrines of justification and good works used language different from that of Luther, it is very probable that the attacks of Cordatus were the occasion of the elector's fears. Gieseler (*Kirchengeschichte* III. part II. p. 201) doubts whether Luther and Bugenhagen were ever spoken to on the subject. Besides Cyprian 162-163 and Corp. Ref. III. p. 365, the matter is discussed by Rudelbach p. 101-102, Schmidt, *Life of Mel.* 829-330. Hammerschmidt p. 82-83, says that it may be concluded "that Luther regarded the alterations as unimportant, and did not think it necessary to take any pains to restore exactly the old readings. Planck IV. 21, note—shows that Melanchthon could not at that time have been opposed on account of his alterations, otherwise he would not have been permitted to make the much greater ones of 1540.

tions, and have done their utmost to discover some declaration of his against those alterations. And they have actually succeeded in impressing into their service a rumor that Luther was displeased with those alterations. This rumor, as rumor is very apt to do, has assumed various forms. We need but follow it to its origin, and then leave it to every candid mind to decide on its reliability.* This supposed disapproval of Luther is based on no writing of Luther or Melanchthon, nor on any document whatever written during the life of either reformer. The first time the assertion was made publicly, that Luther had expressed any disapproval of Melanchthon's alterations, was in 1560, after the death of both the reformers, when consequently they could neither confirm nor deny the report. The assertion was made at that time by Flacius, the bitter enemy and persecutor of Melanchthon, whose character he zealously attempted to blacken. The circumstances under which he made the assertion are worthy of note; he was at the time opposing in debate Strigel whom he charged with being unsound. Strigel had appealed to the altered Augsburg Confession; but Flacius found the unaltered more favorable to his purpose. He accordingly tried to degrade the altered Confession, and made an effort to prove that Luther was opposed to Melanchthon's alterations. But what was the authority of Flacius? Had he himself heard Luther express his displeasure? By no means. The authority of Flacius was a certain Balthasar at Jena, who should have said that Luther had spoken disparagingly of the alterations. But had Balthasar this from Luther's own mouth? Not at all. But he had heard another man, Rorarius by name, say that Luther had complained of Melanchthon's alterations.† That is, fourteen years after Luther's death,

*Weber in his critical history, II. 360, has proved the whole rumor utterly unworthy of any faith; and Planck and Heppe agree with him that it is a mere legend (Möhrchen) circulated by Melanchthon's enemies. To Weber history is indebted for the thorough exposition of this subject.

†Wigand also said he had heard the same report from Rorarius. Mueller's Introduction, LXIX. But not till 1577 did Wigand make this statement. The report therefore seems to have had its origin with Rorarius; but from him we have no direct testimony whatever on the subject. The whole thing depends on hearsay. Scheidler, d.

Flacius, notorious for his efforts to degrade Melanchthon, in the heat of debate says that he had heard from Belthasar, that Belthasar had heard from Rorarius, that Rorarius had heard from Luther, that Luther was displeased with Melanchthon's changes in the Confession! When Balthasar said so, or when Rorarius said so, and when Luther opposed these alterations—on this no light is thrown.*

To prove the unreliability of this report, which was so

Augsburg. Confession, p. 58, says: "It is indeed reported that Luther disapproved of the alteration (of the tenth article) and said 'Philip, Philip, you do not do right in so often altering the Augsburg Confession, for it is not yours, but the church's book.' But this is evidently a myth, an invention, which one carelessly copies from another." How unreliable, yea utterly worthless the rumor of Luther's disapproval, is shown by Planck, IV. p. 18. Note. Flacius, who abused Melanchthon mercilessly during his life, never ventured to charge him till 1560, after Melanchthon's death, with having altered the Confession contrary to Luther's wishes. But when all who could deny the rumor had died, then it was zealously circulated.

* It is astonishing how, after the Reformation, Melanchthon's enemies tortured or invented words and facts to make it appear that Luther, the elector of Saxony, and others were opposed to the changes made in the Confession. The elector and Luther are made to declare Melanchthon's doctrines false and dangerous; and yet they use him in all their colloquies and disputes with the Papists and Zwinglians, and generally he takes the most prominent part in them. He is made, according to rumor, to promise that he will not alter the Confession; he is compelled to restore original articles after they have been altered, and his alterations meet with decided opposition; and yet, in spite of this rumor, facts tell a very different story. Every new edition of the Confession is an altered one; not a word of complaint is heard; not a single altered article is removed and the original reinstated in its place; at Wittenberg, throughout the electorate of Saxony, and in all Germany and in other countries, the altered editions are received by all Protestants, without a dissenting voice. But what are stubborn facts to men determined at all hazards to prove that Luther, the elector, and others were opposed to Melanchthon's alterations? These attempts belong to the many disgraceful efforts, after the Reformation, to destroy Melanchthon's influence and to blacken his character. He was accused of not being orthodox; and it was thought that this charge could be substantiated, if it could be shown that Luther opposed his alterations. If the testimony of his malignant enemies must be taken, then Luther not only disapproved of Melanchthon's alterations, but Melanchthon's character itself was of the very worst kind.

extensively promulgated by the Jena theologians, who were the rivals and opponents of those of Wittenberg, and by all Melanchthon's enemies, we need not urge the fact that the Wittenberg theologians emphatically denied the report, but we need only look at a few acknowledged facts. The principal alterations were all made at Wittenberg during Luther's lifetime; and the alteration of the 1th article was published six years before Luther's death. Luther must consequently have been aware of these changes. *And yet in all Luther's letters and other writings there is not a word nor even a hint of his disapproval!* In Melanchthon's writings there is not even the slightest intimation that Luther ever manifested towards him the least dissatisfaction on account of his alterations. Nor is there any document written during the lifetime of either reformer which indicates or intimates that Luther was displeased with the alterations. And it must not be forgotten, that no effort was made to prevent the alterations, or to prevent the circulation of altered editions, or to reprint the unaltered edition.

Every one knows that Luther was not the man to hide his displeasure, especially in matters of so much moment. Had he regarded those changes as corruptions of doctrine, he would undoubtedly have opposed them publicly and actively.* And the fact that Melanchthon was allowed to make his alterations without opposition from Luther, is strong presumptive evidence that Luther actually approved of these alterations. There is no doubt that Melanchthon actually consulted Luther, his bosom friend and constant companion, about the changes he made. When the first edition of the Confession was printed, he sent a copy to Luther with the request that he should *read and improve it*.† "He sent the printed copies of the Confession and the

* Mueller acknowledges, Intro. LXX. that we have no public expression of Luther's disapproval; but the reasons he assigns, that Luther desired to avoid offence, that he and others did not want to hurt Melanchthon's feelings, et cet., are too puerile to be worthy of a refutation.

† The copy is still found in the library at Gotha, and is said to have a number of notes in Luther's handwriting. Melanchthon's words on it are as follows: "Doctori Martino et rogo ut legat et emendet." Weber II. 296. This shows that from the beginning it was Melanchthon's intention to improve the Confession and that he wanted Luther's assistance.

Apology to Luther, so that, if any fault was found in them, he might remove it; and with him he rejoiced that God permitted them to confess so freely and publicly before the world.”*

There is other evidence that Luther approved of Melanchthon's alterations. It is the testimony of Chyträus and Selnecker (while these men favored Melanchthon's alterations; afterwards they opposed them and changed their testimony—namely after the death of the reformers), and Peucer, the son-in-law of Melanchthon;† also the testimony of the theologians of the electorate of Saxony at the colloquy at Altenburg, and that of the Hessian and Magdeburg theologians in their memorial respecting the Formula of Concord.

From all the facts in the case we are led to conclude, that during the Reformation Melanchthon's changes in the Confession were regarded by the Protestants as improvements; and not till after the Reformation was there any active or public opposition to those alterations, a fact which is acknowledged, though reluctantly, by those most strenuously opposed to Melanchthon's course in this respect.‡

But while there was no opposition to Melanchthon's al-

* This is the language of Rudelbach, in his Introduction, p. 99.

† Heppe, Conf. Ent. p. 119. Peucer in 1562, wrote: “Fuit autem posterior (editio emandatio) scripta a Philippo, mandante, recognoscante et approbante Luthero, et necesse fuit, eam Scribi propter adversarios, quod multi cavillarentur illi, quæ oportuit explicari, ut occasiones et argumenta talium cavillationum—iis adimerentur.” Chyträus speaks of the Confession and Apology, in his history of the Confession p. 56, as being enlarged and improved during Luther's lifetime, evidently intending to intimate that it was done with Luther's approval. Selnecker, also a Lutheran theologian and the publisher of the first edition of the Book of Concord, says: “Recognita est Augustana Confessio posterior relegente et approbante Luthero, ut viri adhuc testes affirmant.” This same Selnecker wrote in 1575, that some parts of the Confession had been explained more fully and had been enlarged, but not by the arbitrary will of any one person, but in the name of all the doctors. Heppe. Conf. Entw. p. 120. And the Wittenberg theologians, at the colloquy at Altenburg, also testified, that Luther approved of Melanchthon's alterations. Planck IV. p. 18-19,—note.

‡ Some try to insinuate or show that there was, during the Reformation, opposition to these changes; but that it was quiet, neither active nor public. The question arises, how do these men

terations during the Reformation, we have the most direct proof that they were received with great favor. In 1541 Brentz, who was at Augsburg during the preparation of the Confession and was one of Melanchthon's most intimate advisers on that occasion, wrote as follows:* "I am accustomed to compare this last edition of the Confession with the preceding ones; I find thus that much has been changed, but I know that Philip changes nothing prematurely or inconsiderately. When I weigh the causes of the alterations it is astonishing what fruit I gather from the reading."†

To the Papists, as might have been expected, we are indebted for the first opposition to Melanchthon's alterations. True to their papistical principle, that what is once confessed is forever unconditionally and unalterably binding, they looked upon all alterations and improvements in the Confession as altogether unjustifiable. Though they had rejected the Confession and had requested the Protestants to do the same, they now regarded all changes in the Confession as a violation of their obligations. But their strongest reason for opposing the changes, was the fact that the altered Confession was a stronger protest against Romanism than the original. Dr. Eck, the violent opposer and fierce enemy of Luther, has the credit of being the first one who publicly opposed Melanchthon's alterations—a worthy leader of the host of calumniators who afterwards slandered and denounced Melanchthon for his supposed defection from the faith. In 1541 a conference was held at Worms between the Catholics and Protestants, at which the religious questions were again discussed, the hope of a reunion not being altogether abandoned yet. The principal speakers were Eck and Melanchthon. At the very beginning of the colloquy (Jan. 14, 1541) Dr. Eck objected to the copy of the Confession used by the Protestants, claiming that it was not

know there was opposition if it did not manifest itself? Rudelbach thinks there was dissatisfaction, but it was not expressed ("nicht ausdrücklich") p. 100. What kind of dissatisfaction was it then? and how was its existence known to succeeding generations?

* Corp. Ref. IV. p. 737. Schmidt's Life of Mel., p. 373. Planck IV. p. 23, note.

† Appendix G.

like the original, but was altered.* Melanchthon replied that, whilst some things were made milder or more explicit, the matter itself was not changed. Eck, however, insisted that the matter too had been changed, as he would prove when they came to article 10. But they did not get that far, as after four days the colloquy was abruptly closed by order of the emperor.†

* Cyprian, 185. Weber, II. 307. Salig, I. 508. Seckendorf, 1893. Rudelbach, 104.

† For this colloquy the Protestants received very explicit instructions from the elector, who carefully consulted the Wittenberg theologians on the subject. But at this colloquy the altered Confession of 1540 was made the basis of the discussions. Now, if the elector, Luther, and the other Wittenberg theologians had been opposed to the altered edition, they would surely have prevented its use at Worms, for they could not be ignorant that it was to be used there. But from them and the Protestants at the colloquy not the slightest objection is heard, not even after special attention had been called to the alterations by Dr. Eck. Twenty-seven Protestants were appointed for this colloquy, and the altered edition must have been used officially here with their knowledge and consent. And no one will believe that they would have remained silent on the subject, if they, the elector, and Luther had really been opposed to the altered edition. They were not, however, willing to tread in the footsteps of the Papists in opposing Melanchthon's alterations, as was afterwards done by some in the name of Lutheran orthodoxy. Planck, IV. 22, note, shows that after Eck thus called attention to the alterations of the Confession, especially the 10th article, the Protestants could not have been silent had they not approved of these alterations. All the Protestant delegates no doubt reported Eck's objection to their princes. In 1542 Melanchthon, in his report of the colloquy, published this objection, so that it must have been generally known. Yet, after attention had thus been called publicly to this important change in the Confession, neither the Protestant theologians at the colloquy, nor the princes, nor Luther, nor any Evangelical body or individual opposes the alteration, has the original article restored, or has the first edition reprinted. Melanchthon's enemies after his death reported that at the colloquy at Ratisbon in 1541 he was compelled to restore the original 10th article—a report which these enemies could only spread by mutilating a historical document in which, without such mutilation, no one would have found any evidence of the statement. Weber's critical investigations have shown how groundless the report, which probably had no foundation except in the brains of its inventors. And even those who afterwards most bitterly opposed the altered Confession, as Westphal, Hesshusen and the authors of the "*Sächsisches Confutationsbuch*" quoted the 10th article of the altered Confession, so that at that time they must have favored it. Planck, IV. 23, note.

So far were the Protestants from heeding this papistical opposition to the altered Confession, that they repeatedly used the same altered edition at various other colloquies with the Papists. Indeed, as far as there is any historical evidence on the subject, the original Confession was never used at any conference with the Catholics during the entire Reformation, except at the diet at Augsburg in 1530. Those who are anxious to elevate the original at the expense of the altered, claim that the Protestants generally appealed to the Confession delivered to the emperor at Augsburg in 1530; but, whether wilfully or ignorantly, these men forget that during the Reformation the term altered was not usually applied to any edition of the Confession, but the altered as well as the original was designated as the Confession delivered at Augsburg in 1530.* Not only was the altered edition used at the first colloquy at Worms, but also at the colloquy at Ratisbon in 1546,† and also at the second col-

* The title page of the German Confession of 1540 is: "The Confession of Faith delivered by several princes and cities to his imperial majesty at the diet held at Augsburg in the year 1530." Heppe, *Conf. Ent.*, p. 117, says, that "it cannot be stated too explicitly that in the primitive days of Protestantism, the expression 'the Confession presented to emperor Charles in 1530' ('das i. J. 1530 überreichte Bekenntniß'." "*Confessio imper. Carolo V. a. 1530 exhibita*") and similar ones, were used to designate the enlarged editions of 1540 and 1542." When the Protestants at the various colloquies and on other occasions appealed to the altered Confession, they always appealed to it as the Confession delivered to the emperor in 1530, as the distinction of altered and unaltered was not yet made between the different editions.

† Weber, II. 327. Chemnitz (Salig III. 711) says, that the altered edition was prepared for the colloquy at Hagenau and was used at the colloquy at Worms in 1540: "This same edition was also opposed to the adversaries at the colloquy at Ratisbon as a form of the doctrine of our churches. And this was done by the advice of Luther, with his approval and consent. (*"Et factum illud fuit de consilio Lutheri approbatione et consensu"*). Thus our party in 1546 and afterwards in all diets and discussions of the religious questions appealed to this edition, which they call the Augsburg Confession. . . . At Worms in 1540 Cochläus, and in 1541 Pighius at Ratisbon, felt it keenly that more light had been thrown on many articles by means of more perfect explanations. For they see that by this means the truth has been made more evident and the shame of the Babylonian Thais has been more openly disclosed. And they would

loquy at Worms in 1557; for when the Papists appealed to the Epilogue to the doctrinal articles in the original, the Protestants answered them by appealing to the altered edition, in which that Epilogue had been changed. At this second colloquy at Worms even the Weimar theologians, Melanchthon's enemies, did not object to the use of the altered Confession.

When one edition of the Confession was sold, another was printed and circulated, and the Lutherans found no fault with it because it did not exactly correspond with the preceding editions. For many years Eck's opposition to the altered Confession found no response in the hearts of Protestants. But the Papists very naturally looked with disfavor on Melanchthon's alterations. Ignoring the right of doctrinal development and progress, they wanted to bind the Protestants to the doctrines and the words of the unaltered Confession. And when the Jesuits arose they were loud in decrying the Protestants for altering the Confession, contrasting their changeableness with the unalterable character of the church of Rome. But the objection of Eck and other Papists did at last find advocates among some Protestants who hated Melanchthon's as fervently as they professed to love Luther's doctrines. To Flacius more than any other man the Lutheran church is indebted for the distinction between the unaltered and altered Confession. A breeder of strifes and a lover of contentions, he, in his disputes with his opponents, who naturally quoted the altered Confession as the one generally in use, was in the habit of charging them with departing from the original Confession, and with heterodoxy. Flacius seemed to hold the Papisti-

have preferred it if the Wittenberg edition of 1531 had been retained."

That the altered edition was used at Worms in 1541, at Ratisbon in 1546, at Worms in 1557, is also shown by *Weber*, II. 322, 327, and 331. *Mueller*—Introduction p. LXXII. LXXIII.—cannot deny that the altered edition was used at various colloquies; but in spite of this he ingeniously, but unsuccessfully, tries to prove that the Protestants never appealed to the altered edition of 1540! His fallacy is very evident; he says that the Protestants always appealed to the Confession presented to the emperor, not to the *Variata*, not considering that the altered edition was not yet known as the *Variata*, but as the "Confession presented to the emperor in 1530."

cal view of the Confession, regarding it as unchangeable, and all improvements as a departure from the faith to which the church was bound. But he not only complained of the alterations in the Confession; he also blamed Melanchthon for the changes he made in his *Loci*, his aim being to prove by these changes that Melanchthon had departed from the orthodox faith.*

Until Flacius opposed Melanchthon's alterations, the editions of 1540 and the later ones were generally called by the Lutherans, enlarged and improved editions, not altered. He first made the distinction between unaltered and altered in the debate with Strigel in 1560, already referred to above. Strigel, who was his colleague in the university of Jena, taught that in conversion the human will is coöperative with the holy Spirit, which Flacius denied. During the discussion Strigel quoted in favor of his view the Augsburg Confession; but Flacius objected to the quotation because it was taken from the altered Confession. Strigel however replied that it was only an Eckian reproach which makes the distinction of unaltered and altered Confession.† Strigel no doubt thought the objection of Flacius was made because he believed the unaltered to be more favorable to his cause. They were both professors at the university which was established to maintain Lutheran orthodoxy, and yet Strigel was conscious of no difference in the authority of the different editions of the Confession. He knew that the Lutheran church made no such distinction, and hence he charged Flacius with making a distinction which was only an Eckian objection to the Confession.

This then was the origin of the opposition to the altered Confession in the Protestant church. Not till after the Reformation did this opposition manifest itself. And from

* Flacius was in the habit of trying to bring his opponents into disrepute by charging them with heterodoxy. He charged Melanchthon and the other Wittenberg theologians with abandoning the Confession, and with it the true faith. This filled the Wittenberg students with indignation, who wrote a book against him in which they declared him an enemy of the Confession and a Papist.

† Salig I. 650. "Vitorinus (Strigel) hat der Antwort so begegnet, es waere nur ein Eckischer Vorwurf, den man von der geaenderten und ungeaenderten Confession anbrachte." See also Salig, III. 604.

this time hatred of Melanchthon, and opposition to the university of Wittenberg and to the altered Confession went together. To understand how much passion, and prejudice, and bigotry, and malice entered into this opposition, one must fully understand the history of the disputes and the heresy-hunting of that post-reformation period.*

This opposition to the altered Confession was thus at first

* Besides referring to Salig for proof of the reliability of the statements made, I also refer to Weber, II. 342, who says: "Properly speaking, the Weimar and Jena theologians have the honor of being the first who charged the altered Confession with heterodoxy. Flacius was for personal reasons an enemy of Melanchthon; the new university of Jena was a rival of Wittenberg; the professors who were called to it, were indeed learned, but would-be orthodox men, imbued with the spirit of opposition and heresy-hunting—since this was always the best way of gaining the reputation of orthodoxy; thus everything was so arranged (and in a certain degree the political interest of the court of Weimar was connected with the same end) to oppress the university of Wittenberg, to bring it into the repute of heterodoxy. And as already at the colloquy at Worms in 1557 the Weimar theologians had succeeded in darkening the fame of Melanchthon, so after the death of Melanchthon the improved editions of the Augsburg Confession had to suffer; in them faults were discovered and revealed which no one of the older theologians had discovered, probably because they were not as clear-sighted. Flacius was really the first of the Evangelical theologians, who at the conference at Weimar in 1560 trod in the footsteps of Eck and other Papists and insisted that there was a difference in the different copies of the Confession, and degraded the later or improved editions. Maximilian Moerlin and Stoessel whom the duke at Weimar, John Frederick, (der Mittlere) had taken with him to the assembly of the princes at Naumburg in 1561, at which the Augsburg Confession was to be signed, followed him faithfully in this matter." These men advised the duke not to tolerate the approval of the edition of 1540, in the new preface to the Confession, which was adopted at this assembly. But these same Weimar theologians, in a new preface to the Augsburg Confession which they sent to Naumburg, and which the duke wanted that convention to adopt, recognize the edition of 1540, but with this proviso that they understand it just as they did the first. Planck, Prot. Theol., IV. 18, note, also says that Flacius for the first time blamed Melanchthon for his alterations in 1560, at the colloquy at Weimar, which was after Melanchthon's death. And there can be no reasonable doubt that before this time there was among Protestants no active opposition to Melanchthon's alterations in the Augsburg Confession.

merely individual ; then it was made a party matter, but it was by no means general. But the opposition of the anti-Melanchthon and anti-Wittenberg party, carried on in the name of the Lutheran orthodoxy, continued and grew. In 1567 a confession prepared by Flacius and his party, was published,* in which the altered Augsburg Confession was openly condemned, not because it favored Romanism more than the unaltered, but because Sacramentarians, Adia-phorists, and others attempted to confirm their views by appealing to the altered Confession.† And at a colloquy held in Altenburg 1568, the Weimar and Jena theologians violently opposed the improved Confession ; and Jacob Andrea preached a sermon against it at Wittenberg.

The opposition to the altered Confession, which arose in the post-reformation period, was for awhile regarded as that of a mere faction whose motives were generally suspected of not being the most pure. The vast majority in the Lutheran church made no difference in the authority of the different editions. The church was distracted with the most violent dissensions. The lovers of peace made earnest efforts to restore harmony to the Evangelical church. For this purpose an assembly of the Protestant princes was held at Naumberg in 1561. To secure this object it was decided to sign the Augsburg Confession. But what edition should they sign? After much discussion it was decided to sign the first edition of the German. But in a preface which was there prepared for the Confession, and which was consequently also signed, the altered Confession of 1540, and 1542, was distinctly recognized and adopted. The altered Confession is declared to be enlarged and more stately and explicit than the original. They also state that it was used at the colloquy with the Catholics at Worms, being presented by the Protestants to the president appointed by the emperor, and to the collocutors ; that it was accepted and made the basis of the colloquy. It is also stated that this Confession of 1540, and 1542, had been adopted in most of the churches and schools. The altered Confession is spoken of in the highest terms and the signing of the un-

* It was called the "Grætz-Gera-Schœnbergische Confession."

† Had the unaltered been in use they would probably have appealed to that.

altered is declared to be no evidence that they "in the least" depart from the edition of 1540. It is stated that the alterations took place on account of the disputes with the Papists, for the purpose of bringing to light more clearly the divine truth and of confirming the pure faith against the traditions and institutions of men.*

The duke of Saxony refused to sign this Preface; he, being influenced by the Jena and Weimar theologians, wanted only the unaltered Confession recognized.† But the action of this assembly proves clearly, that at this time, the beginning of the post-reformation period, the various editions of the Confession were of equal authority. Flacius and his party had not yet gained such an ascendancy that they could unlutheranize those who adopted the altered Confession and preferred it to the original.‡ But this Preface proves another fact, that the editions of 1540 and 1542 (that is, the altered Confession,) were the ones generally in use in the churches and the schools; so that the altered Confession at this time was the prevalent one, the one which was taught the youth and the congregations. The altered was really and practically the Confession of the church.

* The following are the words used in the Preface adopted by this Assembly: "Hiernæchst aber wollten sie auch von der a. 40 uebergebenen und erklärten Confession, durch diese Unterschreibung im geringsten nicht abweichen, als welche nebst der von 1542, jetzo bei den meisten Kirchen und Schulen im Gebrauch sei und in etlichen Artikeln, wegen der mit dem Gegentheil gehaltenen Unterredungen und disputationen, ausführlicher gestellt worden, damit die göttliche Wahrheit um so viel mehr an den Tag kommen und der Glaube wider alle Traditionen und Satzungen rein und unverfälscht bleibe." A history of this Convention of princes at Naumburg is given by Heppe, *Gesch. d. deuts. Prot.*, vol. I. p. 364-405. Also by Salig and Planck.

† Unfortunately the disputes on the various editions of the Confession did not terminate with this assembly, nor was harmony restored to the Lutheran church. The contentions continued, and the strife became more and more violent until some twenty years later the Formula of Concord was adopted, which however became the occasion of new strifes and divisions in the church.

‡ Flacius and his party were greatly incensed at the princes who at Naumburg adopted the altered as well as the original edition of the Confession. Salig III. 845 says: "Die Jenaischen Theologen wollten sich bald todt ærgern, dass die Fürsten die geänderte Augspurgische Confession mit unterschrieben."

Copies of the first edition of the Confession were scarcely anywhere to be found. Indeed, it was scarcely known. The edition of 1540 and those following it superseded the preceding editions.

So little desirous were the reformers and the Lutherans generally, during the Reformation, of adhering to the original edition of the Confession, that no effort was made to reprint it or to retain it in the church. Surely, if they had attached any special authority to the unaltered Confession, the altered would not have been allowed so completely to take its place throughout the entire church.

A few facts will show conclusively how little the knowledge and use of the original edition was retained in the church. It was so little known in 1561 that in the assembly at Naumberg the princes actually signed the improved edition of 1531 as the first edition.* At Jena the enemies of Melancthon's alterations made the same mistake, publishing the second edition as the original in their "*Corpus Thuringicum latinum*," which was regarded as having symbolical authority in Thuringen.† The first reprint of the first German edition of the Confession was made by the Jena theologians in an edition of Luther's works in 1557. The arrangement of the writings in these volumes is chronological. The Confession ought therefore to have appeared in the fifth volume which contains the writings of 1530. But it was published with the works of Luther of a later date, in the sixth volume. A note excuses this lack of chronological order, stating that at the time the fifth volume was published no copy of the first edition of the Confession could be found.‡

* The fact that the princes signed the second edition as the first, was proved by Weber II. 336, from the original documents of that convention still found in the royal library in Berlin. By Hoehn the same fact had already been stated before him, so that his investigations only confirmed Hoehn's statement.

† The same mistake was also made in the "*Corpus doctrinæ Julium*," published in 1578.

‡ The note reads: "Diese Confessio oder Bekenntnis et cet. hette ins 30 jar, nach irer ordnung, gedruckt sollen werden, so hats die zeit an Exemplaren crster edition gefehlt." Weber II. 47. Where were the orthodox Lutherans at this time, if even by the most or-

The first reprint of the original edition of the Latin Confession occurred in 1561. During Melancthon's life it was not reprinted.*

In 1580 Selnecker published the first Latin edition of the Book of Concord, which was intended to be the standard authority for orthodox Lutherans. As the authors of the Book were very much opposed to the alterations of Melancthon, it was intended to give to the church the original Confession in all its purity. But Selnecker actually published the second (improved) Latin edition of 1531,† and did not discover his mistake till four years later he was informed of the fact at an assembly of theologians at Quedlinburg. In 1584 he corrected the mistake by inserting a copy of the first edition.

The proof is thus clear that so little attention was paid to the original edition (*editio princeps*) of the Augsburg Confession during the Reformation, and even afterwards till the formation of the Book of Concord, that it was scarcely known even by the most orthodox. But the altered editions of 1540 and 1542 were adopted privately and publicly throughout the Lutheran church from the time of their publication till the close of the Reformation, and by the largest portion of that church even during the early part of the post-Reformation period.‡

thodox, the Jena theologians, a copy of the first edition could not be found? This looks very much as if at that time Lutheran orthodoxy was not made to depend on the unaltered Augsburg Confession.

* Weber II. 24. Matthes 70.

† He made the same mistake with reference to the Apology, a copy of the altered edition of 1531 being published instead of the original edition. Matthes, *Symbolik*, p. 79-80.

‡ Herzog's *Encyclopædie*, Art. "Concordienformel," p. 91, says, that the editions of 1540 and 1542 were publicly recognized without opposition ("unbestrittene öffentliche Geltung"). "The first edition of the Augsburg Confession continually disappeared more and more; many had never seen it (see Chemnitz, *judicium de controversiis quibusdam circa quosdam A. C. articulos*:" "*plerisque ignota et vix unquam visa fuit prima editio*," "the first edition was unknown to the most and was scarcely ever seen"); the Variata of 1540 naturally worked its way as an authentic interpretation of the original edition. In the "*Corpus doctrinæ Misnicum*" published in 1559 as the manual of the church of the electorate of

The opposition to the altered edition, commenced by Flacius and continued until it triumphed in the adoption of the Formula of Concord, was waged for various reasons. Hatred of Melancthon, often most bitter and malignant, as well as the belief that errorists were more favored by the altered than unaltered Confession, have already been mentioned as grounds for this opposition. But there were still other reasons. Some no doubt sincerely thought Melancthon's alterations were not improvements, but were a real defection. Others wanted to avoid the charge of the Papists, that the Protestants were not firm, that they were constantly changing their faith. In 1555 a peace was concluded between the Catholics and the adherents of the Augsburg Confession. The Jesuits, who were very much opposed to the altered Confession, claimed that the Protestants were not entitled to the blessings of the peace and that the Catholics were not obliged to abide by its conditions, since the Protestants had abandoned their faith in changing the Confession.* They argued that the Protestants were en-

Saxony, by electoral authority, the enlarged edition of 1542 was copied, and that too with the original title and the original preface of the Confession of 1530, by means of which its identity with the same was unconditionally and beyond all doubt recognized. Of course the clamor of the Flacian party was now raised against the Augustana of 1540. The result of the assembly of the princes at Naumburg (1561) was therefore of the greater importance, on which occasion the evangelical princes and states—with the single exception of the duke of Saxony, who was entirely under the control of his theologians and who left before a decision was arrived at—solemnly recognized the public ecclesiastical authority ("die öffentliche kirchliche Auctorität") of the Variata in a new Preface which was to be presented to the emperor."

See also Heppe, *Conf. Entw.* 116-130; *Geschichte d. deutsch. Protestant.* I. 87-90. Matthes, *Symbolik* p. 73. Other evidences of the general prevalence and recognition of the altered Confession might be given; but the above is sufficient for all who desire to know the truth. The declarations of the convention at Naumburg alone are sufficient.

The first "*Corpus doctrinæ*" published was the "*Corpus doctrinæ Philippicum*" which was published either by Melancthon or his son-in-law Peucer (*Salig* I. 702). It contained the altered Confession, on which account it was objected to by the Thuringer theologians.

* The charge was altogether groundless, for the peace was made by the Catholics with the adherents of the "Augsburg Confession,"

titled to toleration only so long as they adhered to the original Confession.* And when those who called themselves the orthodox Lutherans, had adopted the unaltered Confession to the exclusion of the altered, it became dangerous for others to adopt the altered Confession. Such persons were charged by the other Lutheran party as having departed from the faith and therefore it was claimed, that they were not included in the peace with the Catholics. The effort was thus made by the exclusive party to exclude from that peace especially the Zwinglians, Calvinists, and Philippists, who adopted the altered Confession, but would not adopt the unaltered. Thus the men who called themselves Lutherans par excellence basely played into the hands of the Papists, who were not slow to use every pretext for their persecutions,† and who did their utmost to promote the dissensions in the Evangelical church.

Thus far we have spoken of original and altered editions of the Confession. But what became of the original Confession itself? If it still exists it is not known where. The probability is that both the German and Latin copies were, together with other documents referring to the diet held at Augsburg, taken to the Council of Trent, and that they were never returned to the archives of the empire at Mentz.‡ Since that time, if not before, all traces of the original have been lost. Nor is there an authentic copy of the original extant. This fact (which is universally acknowledged by those who have investigated the matter§) is of course a source of great regret to some, though they may attempt to console themselves with the idea that some of

by which term at that time was designated the altered as well as the unaltered Confession.

* Matthes Symbolik, 78.

† Weber, II. 400. An example of the way in which the exclusive party as well as the Jesuits tried to exclude the adherents of the altered Confession from the conditions of the peace, may be seen in Salig, I. 756.

‡ This seems to be the general opinion of historians on the subject. Rudelbach, 112.

§ Mueller, Introduction. Rudelbach, 111, 112. Panzer, "Die unveränderte Augs. Conf.," Introduct, XV., as well as Weber and other historians acknowledge this fact.

the copies of the Confession in existence yet vary very little from the original. This may be true, and yet it cannot be told what the exact original was, nor yet which copy comes nearest it. On this subject various opinions have prevailed, some scholars regarding one manuscript as most like the original, and others claiming the same for other manuscripts still extant,* whilst still others have thought Melanchthon's editio princeps ought to be accepted as most authentic. The question will probably never be decided. The publishers of the Book of Concord, suspecting alterations, were unwilling to adopt Melanchthon's first German edition, so a copy of the Confession in the archives at Mentz, which was supposed to be the original, was published in that book. The discovery and restoration of the supposed original German Confession was of course a source of joy to those whose orthodoxy depended on the possession of the original; but as this supposed original differed from all the other editions of the Confession, the inevitable conclusion was, that since the close of the diet at Augsburg till the publication of the copy of the Confession found at Mentz, in the Book of Concord, the Lutheran church had no authentic copy of the Augsburg Confession.†

For a long while the world was persuaded that the German Confession in the Book of Concord was an exact copy of the original. The publishers of this Book had not seen the original; they, however, depended on Cœlestin, who affirmed that he had copied that original to the very letter. But he was not reliable. In 1729 a German scholar, Pfaff by name, was informed by those who had charge of the archives at Mentz, that in the 16th century the Protestant princes had not secured a copy of the original Confession from the archives; that the original had long been lost, and that the copy obtained by the Protestants and adopted in the Book of Concord was copied from the minutes of the

* There are still extant nine Latin, twelve German and one French manuscripts of the Confession. These are probably all copies of the Confession before it was finished.

† How these fortunate discoverers of the original must have pitied the Reformers and the whole Lutheran church before their day—if they really believed there could be a Lutheran church without the original Augsburg Confession!

diet held at Augsburg. When this fact was published it was zealously denied by those who thought the authenticity of the copy in the Book of Concord must be defended at all hazards. It was even asserted that the original German and Latin Confession was to be found yet at Mentz. In 1781 Weber got permission to examine the archives, and to his great surprise a copy of the German Confession of 1540 was shown to him as the original, proving the ignorance of the men having charge of the archives. Further investigation showed that no original Confession was to be found.

But what of the reliability of the German copy in the Book of Concord? By a thorough critical examination it has been proved by Weber that Pfaff was right. It was taken from a copy, not from the original Confession. And the copy it was taken from was in all probability a copy of the Confession before it was finished. And the copy in the Book of Concord, so long regarded as the original, has no right to that claim.* It literally swarms, as Weber says, with false and suspicious readings.†

Even the signatures to the German Confession in the Book of Concord are incorrect.‡ Every one must be struck with the fact that in the Book of Concord the Latin copy of the Confession has the signatures of seven princes, whilst the German has only five, those of John Frederick, duke of Saxony, and Francis, duke of Luneburg, being omitted.§

* By the most laborious research and collations Weber has demonstrated that the German Confession in the Book of Concord is altogether unworthy of being regarded as authentic. All efforts to refute his arguments have proved futile, so that the correctness of his conclusions is now generally acknowledged.

† Appendix H.

‡ The copy at Mentz had no signatures. But Cœlestin fraudulently attached signatures to his copy, which are not correct. "The text (in the Book of Concord), as far as the signatures are concerned, was corrupted, since to the copy in the archives at Mentz, which has no signatures, signatures were manufactured, which are neither diplomatically nor historically correct, and which the publishers of the Book of Concord, I know not for what reason, adopted." Weber, I. 189. Matthes, Symbolik 68.

§ Chytræus, who professes to give an exact copy of the same copy at Mentz, from which the copy in the Book of Concord was supposed to be taken, gives the signatures of six princes, omitting only that of John Frederick.

Surely, if seven princes signed one Confession, then they must also have signed the other. And there can be no doubt that the signatures to the German Confession in the Book of Concord are forged, the copy from which they were taken having no signatures at all.

Only some of the most striking proofs that these signatures are not correct can here be given. In all Melanchthon's editions, German as well as Latin, the names of seven princes are attached; and surely we cannot believe that Melanchthon would add the names of princes to a document which they did not sign; and if he had committed such a forgery it would at once have been discovered and exposed. Melanchthon undoubtedly gave correctly the original signers of both the German and the Latin copy. Spalatin who was at the diet, states in his *Annals*, that the two princes, whose names are omitted in the German copy in the Book of Concord, signed the Confession, and gives the names of the seven princes who signed it, which are the same as those given by Melanchthon. Justus Jonas, writing to Luther June 25th, 1530, the very day the Confession was presented, says, that John, the prince electoral, signed the Confession. And the imperial recess distinctly mentions Francis, duke of Luneburg, as one of the signers. On the 6th of July 1530 Luther wrote a letter to Hausmann in which he gives the names of the signers of the Confession, and with the others, the names of John Frederick and duke Francis.*

We are therefore compelled to believe that the German copy in the Book of Concord is not only no copy of the original, but of a copy which itself was not taken from the original, and that even its signatures are spurious and forged. The German and Latin originals undoubtedly had the same signatures. These were the signatures of John, elector of Saxony; George, Margrave of Brandenburg; Ernest, Duke of Luneburg; Philip, Landgrave of Hesse; John Frederick, Duke of Saxony; Francis, Duke of Luneburg; Wolfgang, Prince of Anhalt; the city of Nuremberg, and the city of Reutlingen.

* The argument that these two were not reigning princes at the time, and therefore did not sign the Confession, was invented a century after the presentation of the Confession.

In spite of the errors in the German copy in the Book of Concord, many regard it as nearest the original. Others give the decided preference to Melanchthon's first edition. As the original Confession has never been published, we must content ourselves with what we have, leaving the question, as to which of the manuscripts and editions is most like the Confession presented to the emperor, undecided. The loss of the original can only be regarded as irreparable by those who insist that the original Confession must be adopted by the Lutheran church. Surely, their misery must be great, when they consider that according to this condition there never was and probably never can be a Lutheran church, as the original Confession may never be discovered.

With reference to the merits of the different editions of the Confession every Protestant will adopt the view of Salig, who wants them held beside God's word and the rule adopted, "That Confession which agrees most with the language of the Bible, is the best."





CHAPTER XI.

AUTHORITY OF THE CONFESSION DURING THE REFORMATION.

THE inherent merits of the Augsburg Confession, as well as the historical significance given to it at the diet at which it was presented, served to make it the first great Confession of Protestantism which gained a commanding influence and received universal recognition as an official declaration of the views of a large part of the Church of the Reformation. It gained in influence, while the other confessions presented at Augsburg were almost lost sight of. It was the common platform on which the followers of the great Reformer and the advocates of Evangelical Christianity stood. And from the time of its presentation at Augsburg till the present day there has been no other creed so universally received by Protestants as this Confession. Its recognition in the Lutheran Church has been universal, though the manner of its reception and the authority attached to it have not always been the same. In this chapter we shall examine the authority of the Confession during the Reformation.

The reception of the Augsburg Confession during the Reformation was not so much by subscription or formal resolutions as by common consent. Without civil and without ecclesiastical legislation, it was generally accepted as the Confession of the Evangelical Church. It was regarded as an expression of the faith of the confessors and their adherents. The faith was already in them, and in that document a confession of that faith was given. It was therefore

looked upon as being dependent on the Church, not as the basis of the Church or its organizer; for that place and office could only be conceded to God's Word and Spirit. Its acceptance was of a general character and did not imply that all the doctrines were understood by all the members of the Church in the exact sense of the author, or in the same sense. Nor was every statement regarded as absolutely binding on the members of the Church. All Protestants hailed with delight its clear statement and proper development of the cardinal doctrine of justification by faith; and it was universally recognized as a correct exhibition of that system of faith of which this doctrine is the head. But on minor points differences existed and were tolerated in the Church. Even on the 10th article great differences prevailed, some Lutherans charging it with teaching the papistical doctrine, whilst others claimed that, as interpreted by Melancthon himself, it contained nothing that would exclude even the Zwinglians. The Confession was by no means regarded as a final statement in reference to the creed of the Church, nor was it regarded as unchangeable or as a binding authority. Subscription to it was not unconditional. Those who received it did so with that liberty which the Gospel grants every Christian. It was not used for the enslavement of its adherents, for the followers of Luther remembered too well the fetters of popery, from which they had just been freed, again to submit to any instruments of tyranny, whether in the shape of decrees, or papal bulls, or confessions. The period was one of fermentation; the doctrines were in a fluid state, and the time had not yet come to congeal them into a frozen mass afterwards dignified with the name of Lutheran orthodoxy. The faith of the Gospel was so living in the hearts of the members of the Evangelical Church, that it was not yet found necessary to petrify it into a creed of binding authority to preserve it. The Gospel idea, that faith is a seed, a life that grows, was still cherished; the petrifications came in a later period, when the life of the Church had, to a great extent, been destroyed. And Luther and the Church of the Reformation would have spurned with indignation every attempt to make the Augsburg Confession or any other human authority unconditionally binding. The Con-

fession was not even regarded as a law or constitution which may be altered; much less as an unalterable, and absolutely binding authority; though it cannot be denied that the cardinal doctrines of the Confession could not be rejected by a church without destroying its identity with the Church that gave birth to the Confession.

The proof that the Confession was generally received in the sense indicated above, is very abundant, and only a part of it can here be introduced. So convincing is it that even the staunchest advocates for the adoption of the unaltered Confession and all the symbolical books acknowledge its conclusiveness. Mueller, speaking of the period of the Reformation, says: "at that time the Confession and Apology were, indeed, regarded as general confessions, but by no means as symbolical writings in our sense of the term.*" Rudelbach attempts to account for the extensive recognition of the Variata of 1540 on the ground that at that time so much importance was not yet attached to the written Confession. He says: "It must not be imagined that these facts (connected with the reception of the Variata) must all be judged by a later diplomatic standard. When persons still lived more in the clear oral word of the Confession than they gnawed about the written Confession; when persons were not ashamed to receive in trust and good faith what was supposed to proceed from a believing heart and confession; when persons in general still lived in the period of doctrinal development which in many respects had not yet been completed, then it could not be expected that the letters should be weighed and the syllables counted as is done in epigraphs."†

* Introduction, p. LXVIII. "Dass zu jener zeit die Confessio und Apologie zwar immerhin als gemeinsame Bekenntnisse, aber keineswegs als symbolische Schriften in unserm Sinne betrachtet wurden."

* Rudelbach p. 107. "Zuerst darf man sich nicht einbilden, dass man nach einen spätern diplomatischen Richtmaass alle hier vorkommenden Erscheinungen richten könne. Wo man noch mehr im mündlichen hellen Worte des Bekenntnisses lebte, als an dem schriftlichen herumagte, wo man sich nicht schämte auf Treu und Glauben hinzunehmen. was der Voraussetzung nach aus einem gläubigen Gemüth und Bekenntnisse entsprungen war, wo man überhaupt noch in der Periode der *Lehrentwicklung* stehend auf vielen

According to the very principles of the Reformation, as expressed so frequently by all the reformers and especially in the great Protest presented at Spire in 1529, the evangelical party could make no human creed or confession a binding authority without becoming false to itself. The papacy did not reject the Scriptures, but their sufficiency was denied, and consequently it was taught that it was necessary to complement their teachings with human traditions, which were declared to be of equal authority with the Scriptures; and the Scriptures were supposed to be so obscure that the individual Christian could not interpret them, for which reason it was thought necessary for the church (the hierarchy) to give an authoritative interpretation of the word of God. For these authoritative decisions inspiration was claimed, so that they were promulgated as divine. The church of Rome claimed for its decisions infallibility, to which all must bow submissively or else be excommunicated, which was the same as being consigned to perdition. To the direct appeal of the reformers to Scripture the Papists consequently opposed the decrees of councils, the opinions of popes, and the common consent of the Romish church. Private judgment was, therefore, declared to be unchristian whenever it came in conflict with the views authoritatively promulgated by the church. When the hierarchy became corrupt they could burden the conscience and spread corruptions as much as they pleased, and no individual Christian, who admitted their principles, had a right to oppose them. According to the papistical principles certain men of a certain age fixed unalterably and unconditionally what must forever be believed by all the members of the Church.*

Punkten diese noch nicht abgeschlossen hatte, da ist ein solches Verfahren nicht zu erwarten, das gleich dem *epigraphischen* die Buchstaben wägt und die Sylben zählt."

* The council of Trent only decreed formally what had for a long time been adopted theoretically and practically by the Romish church, namely: "that the traditions of the church were of equal authority with the Scriptures, that the apocryphal books are canonical, that the Vulgate is authentic, that there are various senses of Scripture, that the Bible is obscure and that the church alone has the right to determine the meaning of Scripture; the council decided, threatening punishment for all disobedience, that no one relying on

In opposition to this papistical view of the Scriptures and of the binding authority of the decisions of councils and popes, Luther and the other reformers claimed that the Scriptures were sufficient, hence human traditions were not needed to complement them; they also claimed that they were so clear that the individual Christian could understand their teachings. To the arrogant claims of the hierarchy Luther opposed his favorite doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers, each of whom has the right, and is in duty bound to interpret the Scriptures. Scripture must be interpreted by Scripture, and every believer is enabled to do this by the Spirit of God in him. The Scriptures were thus made the supreme and only authority in matters of faith. The right and duty of private judgment, and freedom of conscience were vindicated and maintained in spite of the decrees of councils, the bulls of popes, and the general consent of a corrupt church.*

These principles of the Reformation were adopted by Luther during his own reformation, before the Reformation of the church, in passing through doubts to faith and through inner conflicts to peace; and afterwards these principles were more fully confirmed, developed and practiced, when he found that the Papists attempted to defend their errors by appealing to decisions of ecclesiastical bodies in past

his own wisdom should venture in matters of faith and practice, to interpret the Scriptures according to his views and thus oppose the sense fixed by the holy mother, the church, or by the unanimous interpretation of the church, even supposing that such conflicting interpretations should never be made public." Scheidler, d. Augs. Conf. p. 35.

* That these were the views held by the reformers is so well known that proofs from their writings need not be drawn. These are the great principles on which they acted and which alone made the Reformation possible. As the papistical principles, which destroyed the supremacy of Scripture and the right of private judgment, were the source of the corruptions of the Romish church, so the opposite principles of the Reformation were the means for restoring evangelical religion. These principles of the Reformation avoided the errors of Romanism by making the Bible supreme and preserving Christian freedom; they avoided fanaticism, because the Spirit of God in the Christian acts through the word, which is a constant check to fanaticism; and they avoided infidelity, for the Bible is made supreme in spiritual things, not fallible reason.

ages. He and his followers regarded the truth of Scripture, not as a dead letter, but as living truth, which may live by faith in the heart, but which cannot be stereotyped into formulas and creeds. To Luther all connected with faith was internal and intensely personal; the church could not make his faith, nor decide what its material must be; for the Bible gave the material, and faith itself was wrought by the Holy Spirit, working on the hearts through the Word and the Sacraments. According to the great principles of the reformation, the councils could no more decide what must be believed by the Christian than they could do the believing for him.*

In perfect consistency with its principles the Romish church regards its utterances as decrees, which are as absolute and as unalterable as those of God himself. These decrees are to be obeyed rather than believed. Indeed, the Romish church legalizes the Gospel and makes the utterances of the church a law unalterable and unconditional, rather than a confession of faith. At the basis of this lies an erroneous view of faith itself, making it rather an intellectual apprehension, than something which lies back of, and pervades, all the intellectual and emotional and voluntary operations of man. Rome rather requires its members to believe in the church, than to believe the doctrines of the Gospel.†

The Protestants, on the other hand, looked upon all the decrees of councils as human and consequently liable to error. They therefore denied that these decrees were

* The reformers carefully studied the fathers and the councils, and often appealed to them; but they ascribed to them no authority independent of Scripture, but only in so far as they believed them to be in harmony with Scripture. Their teachings were not to decide what Scripture taught; but they were to be tested by Scripture and to be accepted or rejected accordingly. "This first distinguishes the two (the Catholic and Protestant), that the one must ascribe to the traditions sanctioned by the church, which traditions are to interpret for him the meaning of Scripture, an independent authority commanding him to blindness and faith, while the other is allowed to test them for the purpose of determining their value according to the convictions they produce." Baumgarten-Crusius, quoted by Scheidler p. 47, note.

† Romanism would reach its greatest development if by some means the church could do the believing for its members.

absolutely binding. According to their principles no mere men, whatever their learning, piety, authority, or numbers, in any age or ages, have the right to determine for the church or the individual what must be believed. In matters of faith, consequently, *confessions* are possible in the Protestant church, but not decrees. And as soon as men make a confession a law as unalterable as that of the Medes and Persians, you may find them to be Pharisees or Romanists, but you find neither Evangelical Christianity nor Protestantism.

With such clearly defined principles, for which the Reformers were willing to die, could it be possible for them to claim that they had a right to make a creed equal to a papal decree? Had they claimed the right to make a creed unconditionally and unalterably binding, they would have admitted the very principle they most strenuously opposed, the very essence of the papacy; and besides this inconsistency, they would have made themselves tyrants under the pretence of destroying the tyranny of Rome.* And such

* "Nor is the Augsburg Confession, according to its true original nature and the object of its originators, to be regarded as a symbolical book in the usual sense of this term, that is, as an unalterable precept of faith and doctrine or as the sole (so-called authentic) rule of the interpretation of the sacred Scriptures." "Should they (the heroes of the Reformation) so have contradicted themselves as to place on their own and on the shoulders of their adherents a new yoke in place of the old one which they had thrown off? Could they, whose fundamental principle (*Hauptgrundsatz*) it was to reject *all* human authority in matters of faith, have excepted their own and regarded it as unalterably binding; could they have designed the Augsburg Confession as a symbolical book in the sense indicated above, as the sole rule for interpreting the Scriptures, even after they themselves declared the same to be imperfect and not free enough, and since they would have prepared a very different Confession of faith had they not cherished the hope of a reunion with their opponents? . . . How could we, with good conscience, give those heroes reverence and gratitude, if they had secured to us in appearance only the highest of spiritual gifts, freedom of thought and conscience? What other emotions could in that case the memory of the Augsburg Confession excite than emotions of sorrow at the lot of man, ever changing one error, one slavery, for another, and never leaving the circle in which he moves with bandaged eyes." Scheidler, *d. Augsburg. Confession*, p. 37, 44, 45.

an assumption of authority on their part would have been suicidal ; for what was the authority of the few Reformers compared with the authority of councils and popes and the common consent in the Romish church ? There was in fact but one hope for the Reformation, and that was, to appeal from all human authority to the divine. The Bible was their only standard of faith ; and in interpreting it they claimed for themselves no liberty which they did not cheerfully grant to others. Nor did they foolishly claim at any time, that they had attained that perfect scriptural knowledge which would admit of no more progress ; they frequently changed their own views, and claimed the right to do so. And they of all men would have rebelled most against the attempt to bind them unconditionally to the views of any man or men held or expressed at any time. After adopting the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice, it would have been the greatest inconsistency for them not to have changed, if they found that they had made a mistake in their interpretation of the Scriptures.

According to the very principles of the Reformers, therefore, they could make no symbol to which they bound themselves or others. The Augsburg Confession was not at all intended to be such a symbol, as has already been shown in another chapter ; nor was it regarded as such by the Evangelical church during the Reformation, as facts clearly prove.

In this investigation it will be important to examine the Confession and see what authority it claims for itself. He who adopts the Confession must also adopt its spirit and the principles on which it rests and which gave it birth. That authority must be given to the Confession by its adherents which it claims for itself. And a man may adopt its statements of doctrine and utterly ignore its principles, a mode of procedure very common in our day.

By no word or hint does the Confession indicate that it is to be of binding authority either for the confessors themselves or for their adherents. The very fact that it was to be used as a basis for peace-negotiations ; that the confessors, as the preface states, were willing to compare their views with those of their opponents, for the purpose of having whatever was not right and proper removed, so that all

might be brought harmoniously into one church,—this precludes the very idea of making it authoritative for the Evangelical church for all ages. If the Catholics also presented a confession, as they were expected to do, the Protestants promised to confer with them with a view of coming to an agreement with them. Now, if the Augsburg Confession had been presented as the ultimatum, there would have been no alternative given the Catholics but that of either accepting or rejecting it; the Protestants could not, in that case, have proposed to compare it with the confession of their opponents with a view of establishing harmony between them. It was not at all regarded by the confessors as the basis of the Evangelical church; for the object was not the establishment of a new church, but reunion with the Catholics, though not on the erroneous basis of Romanism.

It is but natural to suppose that the confessors at Augsburg held the same position on the authority of creeds as that occupied by the Protestants at the diet at Spire in April, 1529. The princes and the cities which signed the Confession had also signed that famous Protest,* and this fact alone would warrant us in concluding that the principles of the Confession were the same as those of the Protest. But we are not left to mere conjecture on this point, since in the Confession itself we have the most positive proof that these men in becoming confessors remained Protestants. At the close of the Preface of the Confession the confessors not only refer to that Protest, but declare their adherence to it, and they declare and protest that they will not abandon it unless the religious difficulties are amicably settled.

But what are the great and fundamental principles of the Protest, which are also those of the Augsburg Confession? At the diet at Spire in 1529 the majority insisted that the followers of Luther should interpret the Scriptures according to the writings approved by the Christian (Romish) church, so that they might agree in every

* Seckendorf p. 945. Johannsen "Untersuchung der Rechtmässigkeit d. Verpflichtung auf symbol. Bücher überhaupt u. d. Augsb. Konf. insbesondere." p. 269.

respect with the doctrines of that church. Here it was claimed by the Papists, that the church had a right to determine authoritatively for the believer what his faith must be. The Protestants claimed that the majority had no right to decide for the minority in matters of such importance as pertained to the welfare of their souls. They claim no right to decide what others must believe, but grant others the same liberty they claim for themselves. They state that it is a much disputed question which is the true Christian church? * Hence, they cannot take for granted that the church of Rome has the right to decide the faith of Christians. Two points form the very essence of the Protest: that the Scriptures are the supreme and only authority in matters of faith; and that there must be liberty of conscience in interpreting the Scriptures. Their preachers, instead of explaining the word of God according to the approved writings of the church, are to have the liberty of explaining Scripture by Scripture. † The Protestants, in thus placing themselves exclusively on the word of God,

* They saw the fallacy of the reasoning sometimes adopted to prove the authority of the church's decisions: The Romish church is the true church, because it has the pure doctrines of the gospel; its decisions are scriptural, because it is the true church. In each case the very thing to be proved is taken for granted.

† Seck. 944. Johannsen 299. The Protest says: "Moreover, the new edict declaring that the ministers shall preach the gospel, explaining it according to the writings accepted by the holy Christian church, we think that for this regulation to have any value, we should first agree on what is meant by the true and holy church. Now, seeing that there is great diversity of opinion in this respect; that there is no sure doctrine but such as is conformable to the word of God; that the Lord forbids the teaching of any other doctrine; that each text of the holy Scriptures ought to be explained by other and clearer texts; that this holy book is in all things necessary for the Christian, easy of understanding, and calculated to scatter the darkness, we are resolved, with the grace of God, to maintain the pure and exclusive preaching of his only word, such as it is contained in the biblical books of the Old and New Testament, without adding anything thereto that may be contrary to it. This word is the only truth; it is the sure rule of all doctrine and of all life, and can never fail or deceive us. He who builds on this foundation shall stand against all the powers of hell, while all the human vanities that are set up against it shall fall before the face of God." D'Aubigne IV. 75. Johannsen gives a full explanation of the Protest, 225-261.

denied the right of councils, and popes, and the church itself, of deciding what must be believed. They refused to be bound by any interpretation of Scripture except that which it gives itself. In declaring its adherence to this Protest the Confession gives us a clear view of the authority it ascribes to itself. The Protestants at Spire who became confessors at Augsburg only made an application of their great principles in preparing the Augsburg Confession—that the Bible is the only authority in faith and practice, and that the individual Christian has freedom of conscience in interpreting it.* And the Confession as well as the Protest must stand or fall with the principle, that no body of men, whatever their standing or character, have, at any time or under any circumstances, the right to make a confession or creed an authoritative interpretation of the Scriptures, or a binding authority for other Christians or for the church. To have made the Confession a binding authority, or an authoritative interpretation of Scripture, would have been an abandonment of the Protestant and an adoption of the papistical principle.†

* Some, who pretend to adopt the Protest, but who zealously avoid its legitimate conclusions, say that the Bible is the only rule of faith, but the Confession is the faith of the rule. Exactly what the Papists said and against which the Protest was aimed. They did not ask the evangelical party to reject the Scriptures as the rule of faith, but they said that the church had decided what the faith of the rule was, in her writings, decisions of councils, etc.

† Had the right of interpreting Scripture by Scripture, in spite of all human authority, been claimed by the Protestants and confessors as a privilege peculiar to themselves, then indeed they might have claimed the right of making a confession which should be of binding authority; but in that case they would have claimed the right of rejecting the tyranny of Rome for the sake of making themselves tyrants. But it is their glory that the privileges they claimed for themselves they also claimed for the whole human family. And there can be no principle more opposed to the principles of Luther, of the Reformation, and of Protestantism than this—that the reformers, or confessors, or any other body of uninspired men have the right to fix authoritatively for all ages the doctrines of the Christian church or of any portion of that church. He who claims for any body of men such right, is neither a Lutheran nor a Protestant. He may not believe in the pope, nor in the mass, but he has nevertheless adopted the very essence of the papacy, whatever name he may assume. He destroys the supreme authority of Scripture by making

Throughout the Confession is consistent with the principles laid down in the Protest. It indeed quotes the fathers, and claims to be in the unity of the faith with the Christian Church; but everywhere the Scriptures are the only source of the true faith and by them all the doctrines were to be tested. The fathers and the common consent of the Church are quoted to show that the Protestants are not guilty of the charge, so frequently made, that they were introducing novel and dangerous doctrines. The confessors want to prove that they are in harmony with the Scriptures and consequently with the true Christian Church whose purest doctrines and best writers are quoted because they are believed to be in harmony with the Scriptures.

The 7th article of the Confession gives the Protestant idea of the Church. It consists not in uniformity of ceremonies, nor in the binding authority of any human creed; but it is "the congregation of all believers, among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity, and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel." According to the Confession and the Apology not even forms and ceremonies can be made a binding authority by men; how much less the doctrines, which are so much more important!

Thus the Confession throughout makes the Scriptures the final appeal. It wants its own doctrines accepted or rejected according to this test. The confessors believed they had expressed in their Confession the true doctrine of Scripture; and therefore believed that it could stand the test. But their belief that the Confession was scriptural, made it no more binding on others, than did the belief of the Papists that their doctrines were scriptural, make them binding on the Reformers.

a human creed binding. If a creed is an authoritative interpretation of Scripture, then I must go to the creed for my doctrine, for the interpretation (the creed) is supposed to be clearer than the thing interpreted (the Bible). Liberty of conscience is destroyed by subjecting it to the decisions of others. The authors of creeds are made tyrants of the most execrable kind. Luther in that case would be admired because he broke old shackles and forged new ones. Verily, the advocates of the binding authority of human creeds are the worst enemies of Protestantism, and are the men who cast the greatest odium on those who made the creeds.

The author of the Confession evidently had the view of its authority indicated above. Originally it was not his intention to write a Confession, but an apology or defence of the Protestant faith.* He did not change his purpose because he wanted to make a confession for the church on which its faith might be based for all time to come, but because the emperor would not have time to listen to long discussions. This accounts for the fact that during its preparation it was commonly called an Apology, and even sometimes yet after it was finished. And it is not strictly a Confession—a mere statement of doctrine, as the ecumenical symbols—but a confession and apology combined. It does not embrace all the Protestant doctrines, but a mere summary; and Melanchthon might have been satisfied with presenting merely the Protestant view of the doctrines on which there was controversy with the Papists,† had it not been that Dr. Eck had spread fiendish calumnies against the Protestants, thus making it necessary to present their views also on points on which there was no controversy.‡ The slanders of the Papists were, therefore, the occasion of the completeness of the Confession, and not the desire to give the Evangelical Church an unalterable basis of binding authority.

In speaking of the articles on the abuses Melanchthon gives the rule according to which they were prepared, saying that they must constantly be altered so as to adapt them to the circumstances of the times.§ Their object was therefore temporary; they were intended and adapted for that time and those circumstances; and surely the author would have been the first to spurn the insinuation that those articles must now be regarded as adapted to all ages and circumstances, and that, accordingly, they are of binding authority for all time to come.

* Melanchthon to Luther, May 11th, 1530.

† This was the original intention. Letter of the Elector of Saxony March 14th, 1530. Förstemann, I. p. 40.

‡ In the Letter to Luther, May 11th, Melanchthon states that he had embraced in the "Apology" nearly all the articles of faith, for the purpose of refuting these calumnies of Dr. Eck.

§ Letter to Luther, May 22nd.

As proved in a former chapter, Melanchthon altered the Confession every day during its preparation, and he would have altered it still more, if the counsellors of the princes had permitted it.* So the Confession was not what Melanchthon wanted it to be. With great difficulty was it brought into a presentable shape by June 24th, at which time the emperor ordered the confessors to present it. Had he demanded it a week sooner, the Confession would have been different from what it was when presented; had he given the confessors longer time (as they desired), the Confession would also have been different from what it was as presented June 25th. Now, can any one believe that Melanchthon or the confessors could imagine that the form of the Confession June 25th was so perfect that it must henceforth be an unalterable and unconditional authority for the Church in all ages? One must entirely misunderstand the spirit of those men to ascribe such a foolish and absurd notion to them.

How little Melanchthon regarded the Confession binding, is evident from the fact that after its presentation he still kept altering it incessantly. Thus, before its presentation he altered the Confession daily; after its presentation every edition of his was altered, a proof beyond all question that he did not regard the church as bound to the original. Not even during the diet did he think the confessors bound unconditionally by its utterances; for immediately after its presentation he wrote to Luther asking what concessions could be made to the Papists, a question which he could not have asked, if he regarded the Confession as authoritatively settling just what the Protestants must believe and practice. Had it done that, then there could have been no more questions about concessions. And his negotiations with the Papists at the diet, in which he offered many concessions, show that he thought that even during the diet the confessors might depart from the Confession.†

* Letter to Camerarius, June 26th. "I altered and improved it much every day, and would have altered it still more, if our counsellors would have permitted it." After such an acknowledgment, how could Melanchthon regard the form assumed June 25th as binding?

† Schmidt in his "Philip Melanchthon" p. 210, says: "However great was the importance of the Confession, it must not be

Luther's principles on human and divine authority in matters of faith, are so well known that no extended reference to his utterances is needed to give his views of the authority of human creeds.* Even the fathers, whom he esteemed so highly, are not an authority for us, but only in so far as they agree with Scripture and reason. He says: "Thus St. Augustine also acted and wrote, that he believed no teacher, however holy and learned he might be, unless he proved his doctrine from Scripture or with clear reason. From this we however learn how the fathers are to be read; namely, we are not to regard what they say, but whether

overlooked, that Melancthon, when he wrote it, had not the remotest idea that he was writing a rule which was to be binding for the whole future. How could the modest man, who scarcely believed himself equal to the occasion, have imagined, that he was speaking too in the name of coming generations? Not a trace of such an arrogant thought is to be found in any of the numerous letters of this period. He only aimed to give a testimony of what the Protestants taught, in order to refute the false charge of heresy. In several places too the Confession has evidently the marks of being a work intended for a particular period of time, adapted to certain circumstances, and prepared with a hope of reunion with the Catholics." In 1539, Melancthon wrote a pamphlet entitled: *De ecclesia et de auctoritate verbi Dei*, "in which he shows that as far back as into the second century, departures from the Evangelical doctrines are found among the fathers, for which reason the Bible alone can be the authority for the church and its faith." Herzog. Ency. Vol. 9. 288.

* Julius Kœstlin in Herzog's Enc., Art. Luther p. 611, gives Luther's view on this subject. According to Luther's views it is indeed very precarious to teach anything contrary to the unanimous consent of the church; but in its temporal development the church errs and sins. For the believer no decision of the ministry in the interpretation of the Scriptures can be decisive, "but decisive for every believer must be the Word of God itself, which is accessible to all and by no means ambiguous, and every layman, by virtue of the Spirit imparted to him, is himself to judge all things as a spiritual man, and yet he is to be judged by none. If thus there is to exist no decisive external human authority in spiritual things, the door seems to be open to strife and factions; this Luther knows: by this means the devil wants to make us tired again of the Scriptures; if now men want to build on the councils, the fathers, and human decrees, then the Scriptures will be entirely lost, and men will be the devil's altogether (mit Haut und Haaren); God only can prevent this and help."

they also speak clear Scripture or reason.”* Indeed, if Luther at any time made human authority in matters of faith binding, he was not the same who at Worms so heroically rejected all human decrees and planted himself immovably and solely on the Word of God.

Of the Confession itself Luther was a great admirer and he spoke of it in the highest terms. He says he is greatly pleased with it; rejoices that he has lived “to see the hour in which, through his so great confessors in so great an assembly, Christ had been preached by means of so excellent a Confession.” He thinks the adversaries cannot refute it, and that the diet, though the preachers had been silenced, had been compelled to hear from the Confession more than they would have done from preachers in a whole year.† But his admiration of the Confession and his joy at its presentation did not cause him to forget that it was a human document and was consequently by no means to have the authority due only to God’s Word. And whilst he praises so highly the Confession, he also plainly intimates that it is not what he wanted it to be or would have made it, had it been his work.‡ When he saw the first form of the Confession, he stated May 15th, 1530, that he could not move along so gently and so quietly, so that already then the draft of the Confession was more mild than he could have made it. The finished Confession was sent to Luther by Melancthon the day after it was presented to the diet. In his letter accompanying the Confession Melancthon expressed it as his opinion that, before their

* Scheidler p. 50.

† July 8d, to Melancthon he says of the Confession, “et placet vehementer.” July 6th, to Cordatus: “Mihi vehementer placet vixisse in hanc horam, qua Christus per suos tantos confessores in tanto concessu publice est prædicatus confessione plane pulcherrima.” July 9th, to Jonas: “Christus publica et gloriosa confessione declamatus est, et in lacem atque faciem ipsorum affirmatus, ut non possint jactare, nos fugisse, formidasse, aut celasse nostram fidem. Nisi quod invideo, me non adesse in hac pulchra confessione.”

‡ The aim of this book is not such as to require the suppression of any part of Luther’s testimony. The cause that can only quote Luther’s favorable opinions of the Confession, but demands the suppression of all that is unfavorable, deserves our pity.

adversaries replied to it, the Protestants ought to decide what could be conceded to them on "both the elements in the Eucharist, the Marriage of priests, and private Mass." On the 29th of June Luther replied and for the first time gave his opinion of the finished Confession. He says: "I have received your Apology, and I wonder what you mean, when you ask, what and how much may be conceded to the Papists? . . . For my person more than enough is conceded in that Apology; if they reject this, I do not see what more I should be able to concede to them, unless I should see their reasons and clearer Scripture than I have seen thus far. Day and night I meditate on this subject, thinking of it, revolving it in my mind, examining and weighing the entire Scriptures, and the certainty of our doctrine increases daily, and I am more and more convinced, that I will now (God helping me) let nothing more be taken from me, let come what will."*

The next time Luther mentions the Confession is in a letter to Melancthon, July 3rd, 1530. In this he first speaks approvingly of the Confession and then makes some severe charges against it. He says: "Yesterday I carefully reread thy entire Apology, and it pleased me exceedingly. But it errs and sins in one respect, that it is in conflict with the sacred Scriptures, where Christ says concerning himself *We will not have this man to reign over us; and it falls upon the stone which the builders rejected.* In such blindness and obstinacy, what else can you hope for than to be rejected? For they will not concede to us the name of builders, that they may arrogate it to themselves, and justly; we however must be honored with the name of destroyers, dispersers and disturbers, and that we are classed with the wicked;

* "Accepi Apologiam vestram, et miror quid velis, ubi petis, quid et quantum sit cedendum pontificibus. De Principe est alia quæstio, quid illi concedendum sit, si huic periculum impendeat. Pro mea persona plus satis cessum est in ista Apologia, quam si recusent, nihil video, quid amplius cedere possim, nisi videro eorum rationes et scripturas clariiores, quam hactenus vidi. Ego dies et noctes in ista causa versor, cogitans, volvens, disputans et totam Scripturam lustrans, et augescit mihi assidue ipsa *πληροφορία* in ista doctrina nostra, et confirmor magis ac magis. daß ich mir (ob Gott will) nu nichts mehr werd nehmen, lassen, es gehe drüber, wie es wolle."

for the stone itself was classed with robbers and was condemned. Therefore there is no other hope of salvation except only in the Lord. He must do wonders; neither will he forsake this stone, because it is added: *The same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes.*"*

* It is difficult to give a literal translation of the original which gives the exact idea of Luther. He evidently finds fault with the Confession for not boldly enough advocating Christ. Ruckert, 32, 33, says of this passage, that he can only understand it to mean that in the Confession "more was conceded to their opponents, and their favor was more sought than was consistent with the truth. One ought to be content to bear the reproach of Christ." Luther's charge against the Confession is very severe. He charges it with erring and sinning, and with being in conflict with Scripture, because with Christ's adversaries it says: "We will not have this man to reign over us," and it falls upon (Matt. 21: 42, 44) "the stone which the builders rejected." This seems to be the idea of Luther in this difficult passage. The original in De Wette, V. p. 68, reads: 'Religi heri tuam Apologiam diligenter totam, et placet vehementer. Sed errat et peccat in uno, quod contra Scripturam sanctam facit, ubi Christus dicit de se ipso: *Nolumus hunc regnare super nos*: et impingit in illam censuram: *lapidem quem reprobaverunt edificantes*. In tanta cœcitate et pertinacia quid speres aliud quam reprobari? Neque enim nobis concedent edificantium nomen, quod arrogant sibi et merito: nos vero destruendum, dissipantium et turbantium nomine debemus glorificari, ut cum sceleratis reputemur, siquidem et ipse lapis reputatus est cum latronibus et damnatus. Igitur nulla nobis spes salutis, nisi in Domino solo: is faciat mirabilia, oportet, nec deseret hunc lapidem, quia sequitur: *Hic factus est in caput anguli*: *A Domino autem hoc factum, non a nobis, ideo est mirabile in oculis nostris.*'

The German translation in Walch, XVI. 1082, reads: "Eure Apologie habe ich gestern nochmal von Anfang bis zu End durchlesen. Sie gefällt mir fast wol. In einen Punkt aber habt ihr versehen und wider die heilige Schrift gehandelt, da Christus von sich sagt: wir wollen nicht dass dieser ueber uns herrsche; und habt an den Eckstein gestossen, den die Bauleute verworfen haben. Was kœnnt ihr bei so grosser Wuth und Finsterniss der Teufel anders vermuthen, als verworfen zu werden. Denn sie werden euch den Namen der Bauleute nicht lassen, den sie sich, und zwar mit Recht, anmassen; wir aber müssen im Namen derer, die da niederreisen, zerstreuen und alles verwirren, und dass man uns unter die Uebelthæter rechnet, hochgeehrt werden. Denn selbst der Stein wurde unter die Mœrder gerechnet und verworfen. Derothalben haben wir nirgends keine Hoffnung des Heils und der Seligkeit, als allein in Christo. Dieser muss Wunder thun und wird den Stein

When Luther learned that the emperor had asked the confessors, whether they had any more articles to present, he at once saw that the Papists suspected that the confessors did not give in their Confession a complete summary of the Evangelical doctrines, nor all the points on which they differed from them. Speaking of this subject in a letter to Jonas, July 21st, 1530, Luther says: "Evidently Satan still lives, and he well perceives that your Apology *Leisetreterin* conceals the articles concerning purgatory, the worship of the saints, and especially concerning Antichrist, the pope. The emperor is truly to be pitied, if he instituted this diet to hear the discussions of Luther, as if they might not have enough in replying to the Confession which was presented."*

It is thus evident that the Confession was not such as Luther desired it to be, nor what he would have made it had it been his work.† He looked upon it as giving a history of the views then held, but by no means as a binding authority or law for the church. This we not only

nicht verlassen, weil folget: Er ist zum Eckstein worden: vom Herrn ist solches geschehen, nicht von uns. Darum ist ein Wunder vor unsern Augen."

* "Scilicet Satan adhuc vivit, et bene sensit apologiam vestram Geisetreterin dissimulasse articulos de purgatorio, de sanctorum cultu, et maxime de Antichristo Papa. Miserum vero Cæsarem, si ista comitia instituit audiendis antilogiis Lutheri, quasi non satis habeant respondendo ad ipsam præsentam Apologiam."

† It seems strange that persons can still be found who claim that Luther is the author of the Confession. Could Luther ever have spoken of his own work as he does of the Confession? And those who claim that it is his work are careful to exalt his favorable expression of the Confession; but why be so careful to prove that he admired the Confession, if it was really his own work? The very fact that these men try so hard to prove that Luther's approval was unconditional, shows that they do not believe that he was the author; for if he was really the author, then it is self-evident that he approved of the work. Indeed, if it had been his work, or if he regarded it as such, Melancthon would neither have asked for his opinion of the work, nor would Luther have expressed his opinion respecting it so often. Why do we so frequently hear Luther express his views of the Augsburg Confession but not of the Smalcald Articles? Simply because the latter were his work, the former not. He, however, adopted the Confession with the Protestant church, and in that sense could speak of it as *our* or *my* Confession.

infer from his spirit and work, and his writings in general, but we have a positive declaration of his to this effect. As long as he lived efforts were being made to form a union between the Protestants and the Catholics. For this purpose various colloquies were held and various propositions were made. Bucer drew up a plan of union, on which plan Luther gave his views in February, 1541. Luther approves of the plan, and among other things says: "This is one of the blessings of our Confession, that it relates how matters stood formerly and now stand in our church, just as if one was listening to a history and not to a treatise or a law."*

As the aim of Luther was the reformation of the Church, not the establishment of a mere sect or denomination, so he could only regard as binding for the church those fundamental truths which Jesus and his Apostles made the condition of fellowship. These great truths, which must be believed by all Christians, were regarded by him as essential. They must be accepted by the members of the church; but on non-essentials there must be liberty, a

* De Wette, vol. VI. No. 2525. "Denn das ist unser Confession Gnade eine, dass sie daher erzählet, wie es bereit und zuvor in unser Kirchen ginge und stunde, als horet man eine Historien und Keinen Aufsatz oder Gebot." In 1528 a book of instructions for ministers was published at Wittenberg. It had been written by Melanchthon, but was reviewed, slightly changed, and approved by Luther, who also wrote the Introduction to it. A new edition was published by Luther ten years later, which he took the liberty of altering in some respects. In 1539 this book was introduced into the land of Henry, duke of Saxony, and in 1543 into Naumburg. The Introduction by Luther for the edition introduced into the duchy of Saxony gives the clear distinction between the papistical and the Evangelical ideas of human creeds. Luther says that the book is not published as "strict commands, that we may not establish new papal decrees, but as a history, also as a testimony and confession of our faith." "Nicht als strenge Gebote, auf dass wir nicht neue päpstliche Dekretales aufwerfen, sondern als eine Historie oder Geschichte, dazu als ein Zeugniß und Bekenntniß unseres Glaubens." Johannsen, 487. Here Luther clearly distinguishes between a Protestant Confession of faith and papal decrees; the latter are a law of what must be believed, while the former is a history or confession, a testimony of what is believed at a certain time; the one states what must be always, the other what is at a particular period.

liberty that may not only safely be tolerated in a church, but which is essential to its very existence. Not the binding authority of a creed, with non-essential as well as essential doctrines, is necessary for the Christian, but an acceptance of the great cardinal doctrines of the Gospel; and if one has these, all other things shall be added unto him. We again quote the language of the great reformer: "I have learned and have noticed in all histories of entire Christendom, that all those, who correctly had and held the cardinal doctrine (Hauptartikel) of Jesus Christ, have remained well and safely in the right Christian faith; and though they erred and sinned in other respects, they were after all preserved. For to him who stands right and firm in this, that Jesus is true God and man, that for us he died and rose again, all the other articles are added and they abide firmly with him."*

Luther had many disputes with the Zwinglians on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. He used some severe language against them and at times refused them the rights of Christian fellowship. By many a strict adherence to the tenth article of the Augsburg Confession, which requires a rejection of the Zwinglians, is regarded as the test of Lutheranism. And it seems that, if Luther had made the Confession a binding authority for the church, he would have insisted especially on the binding authority of this article and the rejection of all who did not heartily adopt it. But not only did Luther allow Melancthon to alter this article and to leave out the condemnatory clause entirely; but he himself extended the hand of Christian fellowship to the Zwinglians. In 1536 the Wittenberg Concord was adopted by Lutherans and Zwinglians. On the 1st of December 1537 Luther wrote to the Zwinglians on the subject of the Concord adopted, expressing his joy at the union thus formed. The letter is of the most conciliatory and friendly character, and is in strong contrast with Luther's expressions at the colloquy with the Zwinglians at Marburg in 1529. He deprecates the division which had existed between them, and which had been so great a hind-

* Luther on the "Drei Symbola" quoted in Heppe's "Bekenntnisschriften," Introduction XVIII, note.

rance to the cause of Christ; * he assures the Zwinglians that the concord is to him not merely external, but an affair of the heart, and expresses the hope that God will lead those who oppose the agreement formed between them, to cease their opposition. In reference to the Lord's Supper he says: "We simply adhere to the words, *this is my body, this is my blood*. But, as stated above, if we do not quite understand each other in this respect, the best that can be done now is, to be friendly towards each other, and always to promote each other's best interests until the muddy water is settled."†

We do not know the exact views of each of the Confessors, but we do know that at least one of the most eminent of the princes who signed the Confession, did not regard his signature as an unconditional subscription to all the doctrines of the Confession. Philip, landgrave of Hesse, was anxious to have the Strasburg theologians (who differed with Luther on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper) sign the Confession at Augsburg. In a letter to Melancthon and Brentz, who opposed the union with them, on this subject, written a short time before the Confession was signed,‡ the landgrave says: "We are all one and believe and confess one Christ, and seek salvation through him. Those whom you call errorists regard God's Word as true in all respects, but they take the words respecting the Supper in a different sense from what you do. Therefore I think, since they agree with you in all respects, confess Christ too just as you do, and also confess that Christ is eaten by faith in the Supper, and do not say that God cannot do this or that, but that these things are to be received, as they state, according to faith and the Scriptures; since therefore Christ cannot well be eaten otherwise than by believers and by faith, since Christ has a glorified body, and since a glorified

* "For the division has never helped me nor any one, but has done much injury, so that nothing either useful or good was to be hoped from it, or can be hoped for."

† "Doch, wie droben gesaget, wo wir hierin einander nicht gänzlich verstünden, so sey das itzt das beste, dass wir gegenander freundlich seyn, und imer das beste zu einander versehen, bis das Glüm und trübe Wasser sich setze."

‡ June 11th 1530, Corp. Ref. II. No. 719.

body does not feed the belly; I think such a view is without danger, hope also to God the Almighty, you will think differently.”* Here the landgrave clearly differed from Luther, who taught that the body and blood of Christ are received by unbelievers as well as by believers; and the 10th article in the Confession teaches the same. Melanchthon and Brentz had warned the landgrave not to adopt erroneous views respecting the Sacrament. To this he replies in the same letter near the close: “You beseech me not to let myself be drawn from the true meaning of the sacrament; you need not doubt, that if God please I will trust the promises of God and his word; although in this matter I cannot be convinced of your view by means of a clear text, without comment. But I will hear you all cheerfully, and make my reason subject to the true sense, but according to God’s word.” Here he states distinctly that he is not convinced that their view is scriptural. Melanchthon feared he could not be induced to sign the Confession, and on the 22d of May wrote to Luther: “The landgrave of Hesse is now considering the question of signing our Confession, and it seems that he could be brought on our side; but it is necessary for you to write to him. Therefore I earnestly beseech you to write to him and exhort him not to burden his conscience by the defence of a wicked doctrine.” He indeed signed the Confession, but that was not an unconditional adoption of all its articles, surely not of the tenth. As proof of this we have not only his own declarations given above, which he did not retract, and the fact that he never favored the rejection of the Zwinglians, with whom he coincided in some respects more in the doctrine of the Eucharist than with Luther; but we have also direct testimony from one of the principal theologians at Augsburg, written soon after the Confession was signed. Justus Jonas in writing to Luther about the reading of the Confession and also about its signatures says:† “The land-

* That is, the landgrave hopes they will form a union with the Strasburgers on the same Confession.

† Corp. Ref. II. No. 752.

grave has signed with us, but he nevertheless says that he is not satisfied by us respecting the sacrament.”*

At a convention of Catholics and Protestants held at Schweinfurth in 1532, the former tried to bind the latter to the views laid down in the Confession and Apology; this was to be a condition of peace. It was thus attempted to force a genuine papistical principle on the Protestants. Philip of Hesse, however, gave the true Protestant view, when he replied through his delegates, that they did not intend to adhere literally to the Augsburg Confession, which was only an approximate and not a complete exhibition of their doctrines and of the papal abuses; but that they expected to abide in general by the doctrine exhibited at Augsburg. That the council, till the assembling of which peace should be made provisionally, was not to decide the doctrines according to human systems, but according to the sacred Scriptures.†

The proceedings at Augsburg, after the presentation of the Confession, give us an idea of the light in which the confessors regarded their signatures. The Confession was not their ultimatum in their dealings with their adversaries.

* “Landgravius subscripsit nobiscum, sed tamen dicit, sibi de sacramento a nostris non-satisfieri.”

† Johannsen p. 350. In 1557 Philip of Hesse again expressed views similar to the above. At that time he stated, that the Confession had originally been presented to the emperor with the intention of abandoning it if any defects were found in it. He says too, that he was not bound so to the Augsburg Confession that he could not abandon it if he were convinced of errors in it. He says: “Denn man habe die Confession nicht so für gewis angenommen, sondern es dahin gestellt, wo man sie, die Confessions verwandten in einigen Punkten besser berichten könnte.” “Bei der Augs. Conf. wollen S. F. G. bleiben, haben die zu Naumburg unterschrieben, sind aber davon so hart nicht gebunden, so man sie eines bessern berichten könnte.” Hepp, *Gesch. d. deutsch. Protestantismus* I. p. 151. The elector of Saxony, the most eminent of the confessors, regarded the Confession as binding only in so far as it was scriptural. The 21st of July, 1530, he addressed the emperor on the subject of the Confession, and offered to abandon whatever might be taught in his land contrary to the Scriptures. Not obstinate adherence to views once held, or to the Confession presented, but an unflinching adherence to the Scriptures was his aim. Förstemann II. p. 113-119. Johannsen 828-830.

Melanchthon was anxious to make concessions for the sake of peace; Luther was also willing to make concessions, if only the gospel and the right to preach it were retained; the various Protestant theologians at Augsburg advised concessions, without which all efforts to form an agreement with their opponents would be vain. And immediately after the Confession was presented, the question was earnestly discussed, on what points the Protestants could yield. And after the Papists presented their Confutation, the Protestants held many conferences with them, in which it was agreed to make concessions to the Papists on various points, provided that thereby peace could be maintained. And on various points an agreement was actually entered into with the Papists; and the failure of an entire agreement was ascribed by the Protestants to the Papists, who wanted the former to yield everything, while they themselves made no concessions.* The concessions on the part of the Protestants would have been impossible, if they had regarded the Confession a binding authority; and that they did not do this, is best of all proved by the proceedings at Augsburg, which have already been given in preceding chapters.

For the confessors themselves the last appeal in every instance was the Bible itself. It alone was regarded by them as infallible, and consequently it alone was considered binding. Hence they offer in the Preface of the Confession, to compare their views with those of their opponents, so that if anything was wrongly interpreted it might be corrected, an offer which could not have been made if they had regarded the Confession binding. They made the Bible alone authoritative; the Confession was their view of the teachings of the Bible; as they gained more light their views might change, in which case they could not be bound

*The numerous colloquies between the Papists and Protestants at Augsburg were based on the supposition that both parties would make concessions for the purpose of restoring harmony. Had the Protestants regarded their Confession, and the Papists their Confutation, as final, such colloquies would not only have been useless, but impossible. Luther thought the colloquies could only be available if both parties would yield, Seck. p. 1110. And the confessors at Augsburg clearly proved that the Bible, not the Confession, was their ultimatum, by their willingness to yield everything except the Bible.

by the Confession.* Their very principles demanded that they should reject any part of the Confession which might be found to be unscriptural.

The views of the reformers and confessors† concerning human authority in matters of faith, were shared by the entire Protestant Church during the Reformation. The Confession was regarded as a general expression of the faith of the Evangelical Church, but not as an unalterable law, nor as a symbol which fixed authoritatively what must be believed. Some valued the Confession more highly than others; and this was a liberty which the Protestant principle demanded, which gives each one the right, and makes it a duty, to test human creeds by the Scriptures and to accept or reject according as they stand the test. There were often different interpretations of the same article, and this was tolerated, for the absurd notion, that all must understand and believe the same human document exactly alike, had not yet entered the Church. Hence, the most violent disputes arose on some articles, and these were tolerated and might have been a blessing to the Church had they been carried on in the interest of truth and in a Christian spirit. These differences were not regarded dangerous so long as faith was living and the Scriptures were regarded as the

* Rudelbach, 53, 62, shows that for the confessors the Scriptures were the only authority, and that the Confession was intended to oppose the papistical idea of human authority in matters of faith. "The Bible was regarded as the highest authority, for all believing confessors, which needed no other authority to support it."

† There are many more utterances of the great men of the Reformation on this subject, which confirm their view of the authority of creeds as already given. But we must content ourselves with a mere reference to other books, where the subject is discussed, as further quotations here would take up too much space. Johannsen, 317, 466, gives the testimony of reformers and confessors, princes and theologians, during the Reformation, on the authority of the Confession. The united testimony of the Protestants of that age shows how consistently the Evangelical Church practiced the Protestant principle and rejected the papistical. Pressel's *Life of Casper Cruciger*, p. 27-36, gives the views of that father of the Lutheran Church on the authority of creeds. Scheidler, *d. Augsb. Conf.*, also gives the views of many of the leading men of that age—all proving conclusively that those men did not attach a binding authority to the Confession.

supreme authority. Errors might and did arise; but their corrective was found in the Bible and not in an authoritative appeal to any human creed.* Such was the confidence in the power of Scriptures, that the Church of the Reformation never doubted that, if they had the authority due them, nothing more was needed for the triumph of the truth; therefore, in the various contests with error, the reformers and their adherents based their hopes on consistency with their principles, and not on a return to the haven of Romanism, which is, the binding authority of human creeds.

A clear and correct idea of the theory and practice of the Reformation, respecting the authority ascribed to the Confession, is given in the preceding chapter, on Melancthon's alterations. Had Melancthon regarded the Confession a binding authority he would never have altered it; had Luther and the confessors regarded it as binding, they would never have tolerated the alterations; had the Church of the Reformation so regarded it, that Church would not so unanimously have accepted the altered editions. The proof is as conclusive as anything can make it, that if the Confession had been regarded as unalterable, and as absolutely and unconditionally binding, then it would not have been altered, and the altered editions would not have been accepted and approved by the Church. And very naturally when, after the Reformation, the opposition to the alterations arose, it was connected and grew with the theory that the Confession had more authority than the reformers and confessors had ascribed to it; for only by making the Con-

* This was the general rule. There may have been some exceptions. During the Reformation the Confession was frequently appealed to for a confirmation of doctrines, but such an appeal was not generally regarded as final. If this was done at all, it was done by individuals, not by the Evangelical Church. In Bremen, for instance, all the citizens in 1557 were required to adopt the Augsburg Confession and the Apology, which Hardenberg strenuously opposed, "since there were no doubt many who did not even know the Apology, others had not read it, and since in it are many difficult Greek quotations which the learned hardly understand. Why place such a yoke on the neck of the citizens and on mine?" Planck, *Prot. Theol.*, II., part II., p. 206. His objection to making the Confession binding precedes this language of his, and is given in another place—Appendix, I.

fession more authoritative than they did, could the author consistently be blamed for his alterations.

The entire history of the Reformation is such a striking proof that the Confession at that time was not a binding authority, that it is difficult to refer to any particular instances as proof. New confessions were introduced into various Evangelical countries which were sometimes published in the same volume with the Augsburg Confession. Even the strictest Lutherans, the Jena and Weimar theologians, prepared new documents which were to be regarded as confessional. It was nothing unusual for the "*corpus doctrinæ*" of one country to differ from that of another. Absolute uniformity in this respect was not at all thought to be essential. For the council to be held at Mantua the Smalcald articles were prepared, and for the council of Trent a confession which was called a "Repetition of the Augsburg Confession." But why not send the unaltered Confession, if that was the binding authority?

The frequent declaration of Protestant conventions, that they still adhered to the Confession, would have been as useless as for a country to declare its adherence to its laws, if that Confession had been regarded as a law. Repeatedly was the Confession adopted by conventions of theologians and princes, and was signed by them, which would have been labor lost, if it was already regarded as a binding authority. To be regarded as Lutheran or Protestant no country demanded of its subjects, no church of its members, that they must receive the Confession as absolute authority in matters of faith. The adoption of the Confession was not at all taken in that sense. The Lutherans could form a union with the Zwinglians in 1536, which with such a view of the Confession would have been impossible; and when the Strasburgers adopted the Augsburg Confession in 1532, they were allowed to retain their own confession, the Tetrapolitana,* which had also been presented at Augsburg and which differed from the former on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

The Reformation was both destructive and constructive. The old foundations, on which a superstructure of tyr-

* Herzog's Encyclo. Art. Bucer, p. 417.

anny and corruption had been raised, were shaken; and though the Bible was made the foundation for a new temple of liberty and purity, it was by no means decided in every instance what the exact nature of this foundation was. It was a period of inquiry, of organization, when the doctrines were like germs producing plants, all life and growth. It was an epoch in which something new was introduced which worked like a leaven and grew like the mustard seed. And he greatly mistakes that period, who thinks its doctrines were like a stagnant pool rather than springs of living water whence issued streams that were intended to flow on forever, widening and deepening their channels, and increasing in volume and velocity as the ages rolled on. The Reformation was a living protest against the Romish theory of finished systems of faith except in so far as the Scriptures clearly finished them. It was life, and growth, and liberty. In that great reaction against tyranny there were very naturally excesses, such as were found especially among the Anabaptists. Sometimes these excesses in doctrine and practice were of such a character as to require the interference of the civil as well as ecclesiastical authorities. Frequently the state authorities attempted to control the church, to the great detriment of religion. Protestant princes sometimes tried to compel their subjects to adopt their religion, whilst those who refused were banished or otherwise persecuted; though the means used by Romish princes, to prevent the spread of the evangelical doctrines, were generally much more severe than those used by Protestant princes. It is possible that then, when it was still common to advocate the right of persecution in matters of faith, some princes, who had partially shaken off the bonds of Romanism, used force to compel obedience to what they regarded as the scriptural doctrine. But this was by no means general, and was done in spite of the Protestant principle, that in matters of faith the human mind and the conscience must have liberty. And if there were different practices in different states; if different confessions were published by countries regarding themselves as Lutheran; it only shows that at that time there was no standard of faith regarded by the church as absolutely binding, except the Bible itself. Though even to this general rule there may

have been exceptions; but if there are any they appear only as individual and isolated instances, on which account they are all the more striking.

In 1552 Osiander was involved in a controversy with Melanchthon, and charged him with assuming too much authority among the Lutherans, and also with giving the symbols an undue authority. He charges Melanchthon with requiring those who were made Doctors and Masters of Arts at Wittenberg, to make this promise:* "I promise the eternal God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of the human race and of his church, also his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, that, with God's help, I will faithfully serve the church with the doctrine of the Gospel, without any corruption, and will constantly defend the three symbols, namely, the Apostles', the Nicene and the Athanasian; and will firmly continue in the harmony of the doctrine which is contained in the Augsburg Confession, which was presented by this church to the emperor in 1530. And when dark and severe conflicts arise, I will of myself say nothing in them, but will first consult with some of the elders who teach the church and retain the doctrine of the Augsburg Confession." Osiander also stated that all contentious persons bound by this promise, made their appeal in disputes to the Augsburg Confession instead of the Scriptures. The elders, whose advice they were to ask, were none other than the Wittenberg professors. Such a promise, he charged, burdened the conscience. Of its effects he gives an instance: When he first preached in Königsberg that God dwells in us, he was much abused by the professors of the university of that place on account of this doctrine. But when Melanchthon wrote to Königsberg that the doctrine might pass, the entire aspect of things changed, and a short letter from Melanchthon had more effect on the learned professors than thirty proofs of Osiander drawn from Scripture.

Melanchthon's reply† shows that he was not the author of this promise, but that it was introduced at Wittenberg in 1533, not by himself, but by Luther, Jonas, and Bugenha-

* Salig II. 984. Johannsen 472.

† Johannsen 473-478.

gen; so that the charge of its introduction falls on them, not on him.

Osiander, in his bitter opposition to Melanchthon, no doubt put on this promise an interpretation which the intention of its authors did not justify. He made it appear that it meant that those who made this promise were bound unconditionally to the Augsburg Confession, and that thus a new tyranny was introduced into the Lutheran church. So jealous were the Protestants of that age of the liberty restored to the church, that Osiander's charge was a very serious one. And so evident would be the tyranny instituted by the promise, if the interpretation of Osiander was correct, that Melanchthon feels himself called upon to defend its authors, and to show that it was entirely misunderstood, that it was not intended as an instrument of tyranny, but as a protection against such "fanatical men, as the Anabaptists, Severtus, Campanus, Swenkfeld, and others." The object of the promise was, he says, to oppose such fanaticism as far as was possible, and restrain the unbridled, and to remind the good of the limits which ought not thoughtlessly to be passed.* The object is to bind to the pure doctrine of God's Word (*incorruptam Evangelii doctrinam*). And the charge of again introducing the papistical tyranny in matters of faith is declared by Melanchthon to be foreign to the real intention of the promise.†

From this promise it cannot, therefore, with justice be inferred that its authors demanded an absolute authority for the Augsburg Confession. Indeed, if the words really meant what Osiander charged, that no one who took the degree of Master of Arts and Doctor of Divinity at Wittenberg, was allowed in the least to differ from the Confession or to enter upon any dispute without first consulting the Wittenberg professors, then the tyranny introduced at Wittenberg was the most absolute. Melanchthon's explanation and the very fact that he defends that promise (he who was

* After speaking of the various fanatics Melanchthon continues: "Quantum igitur humana diligentia cavere potuit, voluit hic Senatus bona ingenia de modestia commonefacere, et metas ostendere, extra quas non temere erumpendum esset; voluit et frenare, quantum posset, minus quietos."

† Johannsen 476-477.

so far from making the Confession binding), show that the intention of the promise was not to make the Confession unconditionally binding.*

This practice of the university of Wittenberg in conferring degrees is, therefore, no evidence that already during the Reformation the Confession was made unconditionally binding. But even if Melancthon was wrong and Osiander right, this does not prove that the practice indicated was universal. Probably only at Wittenberg was this the condition for receiving those degrees, as there is no evidence that the same practice prevailed at any other university. Then, it must be remembered that this promise was made only by those who took the degrees referred to; and by no means by all ministers, or by any churches, or by the lay members of the churches. Even if Osiander was right in his interpretation, it is a strong argument that the Confession was not generally binding, for had that been the case this instance would not have been singled out as a papistical practice dangerous to the Protestant Church, and Melancthon would not have opposed the interpretation if it had been regarded Lutheran, or if the Confession had been regarded by the Church during the Reformation as a binding authority. The promise simply implied an acceptance of the Confession which did not oppress the conscience, nor prevent the rejection of what might be found in conflict with Scripture. And though Wittenberg made this promise the condition of conferring degrees, it did not escape the charge of heterodoxy from that party which wanted to make the Confession binding and which opposed Melancthon's alterations—the Weimar and Jena theologians—a

* The matter is fully discussed by Johannsen, 471, 478. Also by Scheidler, 66, 73. The latter says, 67: "The well known occasion of this document (the promise) makes its sole object sufficiently clear, which was by no means the symbolification of the Augsburg Confession, but only the removal of an evil which could not otherwise be removed." Johannsen, 478, says of Melancthon's reply to Osiander: "In this entire reasoning of Melancthon it is clear that he only wanted to show, that the promise was anything else rather than an unconditional binding to human symbols, that it bound only to the Gospel itself, and introduced no papistical oppression of the conscience; on which account Osiander's charge against it was utterly groundless."

strong evidence that Wittenberg did not make the Confession as authoritative as the so-called orthodox party desired.*

The certificates of ordination, the books on church discipline, and those on the examination of candidates for ordination, which have come down to us from the Reformation period, confirm the practice of the Lutheran church, given above, that the Confession was not an authority unconditionally binding.† A certificate of ordination given by Luther in 1540, and another by Bugenhagen and Forster in 1553 (and approved by Melanchthon, Hostilius and Hezer) only bind to the word of God, without so much as mentioning the Augsburg Confession or any other human creed,‡ which could not have been the case if the practice had prevailed in the Lutheran church of binding ministers to the Augsburg Confession or to any other human authority. Only to God's word, therefore, were the Protestants, ministers and people, bound unconditionally during the Reformation.§

But if not during the Reformation, when was the Augsburg Confession made binding? Some historians have thought that this was not done till after the introduction of the Formula of Concord (1580).|| Whilst it is true that

* It need hardly be stated that the latter part of the promise did not require those who made it, to be a mere echo of the Wittenberg professors, as Osiander seemed to infer. The whole promise was to be taken in a Protestant sense; it made the acceptance of the Confession such as every Protestant could subscribe to. If, however, the Confession was made binding unconditionally by that promise, then Osiander was right in holding it up as an example of tyranny, as a return to the papacy, as entirely foreign to the general practice of the Lutheran Church of that age, and as worthy of special attention and severe denunciation. Whether therefore Melanchthon's construction or that of Osiander was correct, it is certain that as late as 1552, when the controversy took place, the Lutheran Church did not make the Confession binding; and if it was done at all it was only in individual instances, not by the Church, nor on the Church.

† Johannsen, 466-500.

‡ Johannsen, 468-469.

§ Appendix I.

|| So Büsching in a work published in 1789, entitled: "Untersuchung wenn und durch wen der freien Ev. Luth. Kirche die symbolischen Bücher zuerst aufgelegt worden."

the introduction of the Book of Concord into different countries, which was often done by force and by other base means, practically made the Augsburg Confession more generally binding than before, it was not the first time that such an authority was ascribed to it. Already here and there, though not universally, it had been made practically, if not theoretically binding.

In 1555 a peace was concluded between the Catholics and the adherents of the Augsburg Confession. This new official recognition of the Confession was well calculated to increase its authority. It in fact became dangerous to depart from its teachings; and it was not unusual for those who claimed to be the orthodox party, and to adhere to the letter and spirit of the Confession, to charge those who differed from them with abandoning the Confession, and to claim that consequently they were excluded from the privileges of the treaty of peace, since they were no longer "adherents of the Confession." Thus the exclusive party played into the hands of the Romanists, who but too willingly seized upon every pretext for persecuting the evangelical party. It was natural for the Papists to insist that the Protestants, especially after the treaty of peace, were bound unconditionally to the Augsburg Confession; in their eyes it ceased to be a Confession and became a decree. They looked upon the Protestants as revolutionary, and feared their spirit of innovation might lead to still greater changes. This spirit they wanted to curb; and when they found that they could not bring the Protestants back to the Romish church, they did their utmost to make the doctrines once avowed by them unalterable and binding. By this means the spirit of progress might be effectually checked and the freedom which characterized the evangelical church destroyed. The desire of the Papists to make all deviation from the letter of the Confession impossible was seen clearly in the opposition of Dr. Eck and others to the alterations of Melancthon; and after the treaty of 1555 the Romanists thought the Protestants were bound to the Confession by that very treaty.

The Jesuits were at this time busy in trying to check the progress of Protestantism and to bring the converts back to Rome. One of their strong arguments was that there was so

much dissension among Protestants, that they had no fixed doctrines, but were constantly changing;* with this was contrasted the unchangeable character of the dogmas of the Romish church, and the peace and unity in that church. And this argument was often used with great effect, since the divisions among the Protestants were but too apparent. Luther, from dissensions springing up around him, foresaw that after his death the church would be distracted with fierce strife. Whilst he lived his authority was such as to prevent the success of various efforts to rend violently the church in Germany. But after his death things changed. Melanchthon was indeed regarded by the great majority as the leader of the Protestants, and by means of his mild counsels and his great authority he did much to suppress the spirit of dissension which became more and more powerful. But his enemies were many and bitter, who did their utmost to rob him of his character and destroy his authority. Flacius was the leader of this party. Jena was the stronghold of this opposition to Melanchthon. This faction could not, however, rule during the life of Melanchthon. But after his death there was no Reformer whose authority was such as to strike down all opposition. The Flacian party continued to oppose Melanchthon's alterations, and insisted on the adoption of the unaltered Confession. But fearing that this might not secure sound Lutheranism, they also advocated the adoption of the Apology, and the Smalcald Articles, which, being Luther's confession, were regarded as giving his views and as being an unmistakable test of Lutheran orthodoxy.† At this

* Andreä refers to the charges of the Papists against the Protestants for altering their views, as a reason for the adoption of the unaltered Confession—the *Invariata*. Heppé, Gesch. d. deuts. Prot. IV. p. 33, note.

† In 1557 the duke of Saxony, John Frederick, at the instigation of Flacius, instructed his delegates to the colloquy at Worms to insist on making the Augsburg Confession, the Apology, and the Smalcald Articles the basis of the colloquy. Heppé, Gesch. d. deuts. Protestantismus, vol. I. 159 and 166. But already before this the same party had declared in favor of the Smalcald Articles. A committee of theologians appointed by the dukes of Saxony in 1556 declared in favor of the Augsburg Confession, and the Smalcald Articles, as the basis of the Protestants in their colloquies with the Papists. Heppé, Gesch., I. 115.

time the most bitter strife distracted the Evangelical church, and this did more to check the progress of the work commenced by Luther than all the efforts of the Jesuits and the entire papacy. Besides Melancthon's party—called Philippists—and Flacius and his party, who claimed to be the genuine, orthodox Lutherans, there were Majorists, Osian-drists, Swenkfeldists, and various other parties. The Flacian party, being by far the most intolerant and violent, claimed that there must be no union with errorists or with those who tolerated errorists. Whilst aiming to make the Augsburg Confession, the Apology, and the Smalcald Articles authoritative, they at the same time regarded their own interpretation as giving the true sense of these writings. By making these the condition of the union of Lutherans, and the standard of orthodoxy, they hoped to secure the triumph of their cause, the rejection of those whom they designated as errorists, and to restore peace and unity to the church. This party became a nucleus around which gathered the various elements of exclusive Lutheranism. Heretofore the great contest had been against the papacy; but these men were not satisfied with the distinction made between Papist and Protestant, they insisted on dividing the Protestant church itself. The freedom heretofore allowed in the interpretation and acceptance of the Augsburg Confession, had been such that even Calvin could accept it as interpreted by its author.* And those who were rejected by the Flacians as errorists also claimed to adopt the Confession. The exclusive party now aimed to make such a basis as would exclude, not only the Papists, but also all Protestants who did not agree exactly with them. To accomplish this a much greater authority was ascribed to the unaltered Confession, to the Apology, to the Smalcald Articles, and to Luther's works in general, than had been the case before. The broad and liberal Gospel basis, on which the Evangelical church had thus far stood, was to be narrowed down to the contracted dimensions of the Flacian party; and all who would tolerate (even if they did not agree with) those who could not shrink themselves into these narrow proportions, were rejected and per-

* Salig, I. 479, 491.

secuted by this party. This effort to sectarianize the Lutheran church and make human creeds so authoritative that to depart from them was regarded as a crime against God and the state, which must be punished by civil authority as well as ecclesiastical, commenced with the bigotted, contentious, and exclusive party, whose leader was the notorious Flacius; and it reached its culmination about 1580, when the adoption of the whole Book of Concord as practically a binding authority, was in different countries made a law of the state and church. Thus *after*, not during, the reformation was the Gospel legalized by men who called themselves the only sound Lutherans; then the old leaven of Pharisaism and Romanism was introduced into Lutheranism, by means of which the church lost its freedom and much of its purity and progressive spirit. And on men who had lost much of the spirit and power of the Reformation, not to the reformers and their co-laborers, belongs the disgrace of making human authority binding in matters of faith.*

* Appendix K.





CHAPTER XII.

PREPARATION AND ADOPTION OF THE FORMULA OF CONCORD.

So far was the Augsburg Confession from definitely fixing the doctrines of the Evangelical church that the greatest doctrinal controversies in that church only took place after its presentation. A number of its articles were variously interpreted by different men, so that often there was not a little dispute as to the real sense of the Confession. Thus even among those who wanted to adhere strictly to the teachings of the Confession there was great diversity of opinion; and it was not at all uncommon for the opposite sides in a controversy to quote the Confession in confirmation of their views. An adoption of the Augsburg Confession did not, therefore, insure unity of doctrine. Just as the Scriptures were differently understood, so was the Confession. Already during Luther's lifetime some controversies arose among the Protestants; but as the great aim then was to establish the doctrines of the Bible in opposition to the corruptions of popery, and as the energies of the reformers and their allies were directed chiefly to this end, there was in general but little disposition and little time to make the differences that arose in the Evangelical church the subject of controversy. The need of union in opposition to the Romish church was also felt. And whilst the thoughts were chiefly busied about the establishment and development of the great cardinal doctrines of the Reformation, and the heart was still throbbing with the new life which was restored to the church, there was a tolerance of differences on matters of minor importance. Then, whilst he lived Luther

was able, by means of his great authority, to decide many questions which arose. But he already saw indications of the troublous times that were to come, which filled the church with contention and distraction, and caused such lamentable divisions after his death.

Many things that characterized the Christian church during its original formation, were reenacted during its reformation. In those primitive ages of the church there was first of all a necessity for preaching the great doctrines of the Gospel, for the establishment of the church. During this missionary period of the church the controversies were chiefly with religions opposed to the Gospel. But when the church was firmly established, and received recognition from the state, the bitter controversies with heathenism were succeeded by internal disputes, heresy-hunting, divisions, and persecutions, which found their culmination in the unity of the Romish church. In the Reformation the first thing needed was, the preaching of its fundamental principles and doctrines. This was done by the Theses at Wittenberg, the Protest at Spire, and the Confession at Augsburg; by the translation of the Bible, by sermons, pamphlets, and books; and by disputes and controversies with the Papists at colloquies and diets. But when the Evangelical church was once established and received recognition from the empire itself, then the internal strifes became most fierce, and then the attention was no longer chiefly directed to that which separated Protestant from Papist, but to that which separated Protestant from Protestant. Some of these controversies were such as were incidental to the development of the Evangelical doctrines and the more complete organization of the church, and in so far these controversies were right and even a necessity. But often they were based on personal feelings and sprang from selfish motives, and were conducted in a spirit of bitterness and malice which proved them to be anything else rather than Christian; and when waged from base personal motives they were of course more calculated to produce divisions than to purify the doctrines and establish the truth.

The work of organizing and developing the Evangelical church was no easy task. The elements introduced into

that church were not always harmonious, sometimes not even homogeneous. Many who regarded themselves as members of that church still retained relics of the papacy. In many instances the effects of the Reformation were negative rather than positive, that is, many only rejected the popish errors and abuses without really adopting the doctrines of the Gospel, being glad to throw off the yoke of popery, without taking upon themselves the yoke of Christ. In such cases the effects were destructive, but not constructive. The princes who turned from Romanism to Protestantism attempted to carry their subjects with them, often using for that purpose means which were unjustifiable. The effort to make them adopt their views, without properly instructing or convincing them, could result only in external adherence to the Evangelical church. Often the preachers themselves, many of whom had been priests or monks, were grossly ignorant. And the complaints of that period are many and loud that both the preachers and the people had changed their name and forms, but that at heart they were not in sympathy with the spirit of the Gospel. In many churches and countries the doctrines of the Gospel, instead of being clearly apprehended or definitely fixed, were still in a state of formation (often a very chaotic state), and before they could be firmly established a period of investigation was necessary. These investigations led to different results, and these differences were the occasion of many long and bitter controversies, which ended in the complete division of the Evangelical church. Sometimes these controversies were on doctrines not mentioned in the Augsburg Confession; sometimes on the very doctrines of the Confession; sometimes on the authority of the Confession and of other books.

We do not dissect the living but the dead body, and the knife that lays open to view the whole system of the body cannot reveal the soul and its life, but only the organ through which it operates. As long as the church is animated with the spirit of living piety and fervent zeal, it will not spend its time and energies in merely anatomizing the system of Christian doctrines. But when the living piety of a church begins to wane and its ardor to cool, then men take delight in disputing about words, and formulas,

and systems; then they will make religion depend on distinctions merely scholastic and not at all warranted by Scripture; then they will anathematize all who do not swear by the same creed with themselves; then, and then only, will they be able to believe that God's living truth can be compressed into a dead system, which is the test of orthodoxy and Christianity; then they will be able to persuade themselves that they, and they only, have the truth, that consequently they are heaven's favorites and have not only the right, but are in duty bound to condemn all who in the least differ from them.

Such a period came upon the Protestant church. It was its wrangling period, when by many men the theologians were held in estimation in proportion to their wrangling propensities and their skill in abusing and condemning those who differed from them.

In a history of the Augsburg Confession the controversies which distracted the church for thirty years (a kind of thirty years' war), commencing soon after Luther's death, is interesting, because the Confession itself bore so conspicuous a part in the controversies, and because at the end of this wrangling period its position in the church was so materially changed from what it had originally been. In that corrupt period the confessions of the church were made the standards of faith, the rule by which a man's orthodoxy was tested. They were made symbols whose authority was practically, if not, theoretically binding, and which were appealed to with as much authority as the church of Rome appealed to the decrees of the councils, and as the reformers appealed to the sacred Scriptures.*

In the Smalcald war, in 1546, the emperor was completely victorious, capturing both the elector of Saxony, John

* Heppe II. 13, says of this period: "The result was, that the Protestant confessions now began to assume a character quite different from that belonging to them originally. They ceased to be confessions, that is, testimonies of the fact that, in the dogmatical development of its principle, Protestantism moved exclusively on the basis of the sacred Scriptures and the ecumenical symbols; they themselves were now made symbols, that is, rules of faith, for which the same authority was claimed as for the ecumenical symbols and the sacred Scriptures."

Frederick, and landgrave Philip of Hesse. His victory seemed to inspire him with new hopes that he could now dictate terms to the Protestants, though their power in the empire was so great that he might not be able to destroy them.

At the diet held at Augsburg in the autumn of 1547 a committee was appointed to prepare articles which the evangelical party were to adopt until the council, already assembled, should decide all the questions of dispute and should reconcile the two parties. The committee prepared twenty-six articles, commonly called the Augsburg Interim, because they were to be in force only till the council had given its decisions on the subjects of controversy. This Interim was intended to be a kind of compromise between Romanism and Protestantism. While it did not compel the Protestants to return entirely to the system they had rejected, it nevertheless aimed to force on them both ceremonies and doctrines which they could not accept without abandoning their principles.* They consequently refused to accept the Interim, and protested against it; but nevertheless in some places ministers and people were compelled by imperial soldiers to comply with its demands. Moritz, the elector of Saxony, promised at the diet to take the Interim into consideration and adopt as much of it as he could do conscientiously. Various conferences were appointed by the elector, in order that his theologians might determine what could be accepted. Finally a conference was held at Leipzig, at which the work which had been pursued at previous conferences at Meissen, Pegau, Torgau and Celle, was completed. The theologians who met at Leipzig, among whom were Melancthon, Major, Camerarius, and Bugenhagen, could not adopt the Augsburg Interim, but they adopted as much of it as they thought they could do without violating their consciences. Whilst they were unwilling to adopt anything which in their opinion conflicted with the cardinal doctrines of the evangelical church, they nevertheless agreed to accept many of the ceremonies, the restoration of which was demanded in the Augsburg Interim.

* Planck, Prot. Theol. I. 86. Herzog Enc., Art. Augsburger Interim.

The articles prepared by these theologians at Leipzig were commonly called the Leipzig Interim. The ceremonies which this Interim proposed to restore were such as the Protestants had formerly rejected; but they were called in this Interim, "Adiaphora," or matters of indifference, which might be accepted or rejected without the violation of conscience or of the clear teachings of Scripture. Those ceremonies which were supposed to be incompatible with the Scriptures, were not adopted. This Leipzig Interim the elector of Saxony introduced into his country, and a new liturgy was prepared so as to make the worship in the churches correspond with it.

The adoption of this Interim was the occasion of much dissatisfaction among the Protestants, especially among those outside of Saxony. The elector was looked on with great suspicion. Some feared that the door would again be opened to Papal errors and superstition. But the most bitter opponent to the Interim was in the heart of Saxony—Flacius, professor of Hebrew at Wittenberg. In order that he might be more independent in his opposition, he withdrew from the university and went to Magdeburg, where he found sympathisers. The theologians who drew up the Leipzig Interim, especially Melancthon, were most bitterly assailed, as well as the elector of Saxony. Though they claimed that they had only yielded such things for the sake of peace as were not binding, Flacius and his party contended that, under the circumstances, the Protestants ought not to have adopted even "adiaphora," since the Romanists wanted to force them to do so, for the sake of again introducing their erroneous doctrines and practices into the Evangelical Church. The opposers of the Interim also attacked the ceremonies themselves, which had been restored, and between the two parties a long dispute arose as to what are really adiaphora?*

The controversy connected with this Interim is of importance in the history of the Augsburg Confession, because we see in it the formation of two parties in the Evangelical

* A history of the Leipzig Interim and the violent controversy which followed its introduction into Saxony, is given by Planck Prot. Theol., I. 86, 225, and also by Salig in his first volume.

Church in Germany, which from this time began to diverge more and more, and whose opposition was so bitter, and whose differences became so radical, that there was no hope of the restoration of harmony between them; hence the effort of each was to crush the other. Those who adopted the Interim, the adiaphora, were called Interimists or Adiaphorists. Melanchthon was generally regarded as their leader, because he had helped to prepare the Interim, favored its adoption, and defended it in his writings. Flacius was the leader of the opposition. Both had their followers who entered with their leaders into the violent disputes, which were continued even after the Interim had been abandoned.

This controversy was by no means the beginning of opposition to Melanchthon in the Evangelical Church, but it brought out this opposition more fully than ever before. As the controversy was very bitter it also excited much personal feeling, and often men were more intent on abusing each other than on defending the cause they believed to be true. Melanchthon's course in favoring the Interim excited against him much prejudice and suspicion; and though the attacks made against him were often most malignant and unjust, it cannot be denied that his course in this matter was calculated to rouse the apprehensions of many who sincerely loved the principles and practices of the Evangelical Church. Melanchthon's love of peace had become almost a passion with him, and the history of the Reformation furnishes many proofs that for the sake of peace with the Romanists he was willing to make too many concessions.

In opposition to him a party was organized which pretended to be the champions of orthodox Lutheranism. In opposition to Melanchthon's authority they advocated that of Luther, whose works they not only regarded very highly, but they often appealed to them as if decisive in controversies. And from this time we find the two most prominent parties in the Evangelical Church claiming to follow the two principal reformers as their respective leaders. During Luther's life Melanchthon was his collaborer, and they were unitedly working for the triumph of the great principles of the Reformation. Melanchthon's doc-

trines were not in all respects the same as Luther's; this became more and more evident towards the close of Luther's life. But whilst this might cause some alienation, there was no open rupture. Luther was the leading mind in the Evangelical Church, and his great authority did much to prevent the outbreak of violent disputes in that Church while he lived. Melanchthon's authority was second only to that of Luther. His great learning, his clear statements, his skill in meeting an opponent's arguments, his philosophical acumen, and his power of systematizing justly entitled him to be called the "Preceptor of Germany." But though his modesty, and gentleness, and suavity were often effective where Luther's harshness and severity only served to repulse, he was never as popular as Luther and could never excite the same enthusiasm. Then, Luther was the master, Melanchthon the pupil; and with Luther the Reformation commenced. It was therefore natural that after Luther's death Melanchthon's authority should be greater in the Evangelical Church than that of any other living theologian; but he could not take Luther's place, nor wield the same influence over the minds and hearts of men. When, therefore, controversies arose he could not decide them as readily as Luther, nor could he crush an opponent as easily. But besides this there was personal opposition to Melanchthon, and his enemies in the Evangelical Church not only rejected his authority but did their utmost to destroy it, and for this purpose made the most malignant attacks on his doctrines and character. Then there were some who noticed with considerable anxiety the change of Melanchthon's views. He was charged with abandoning the views held by Luther and formerly also by himself. He was also suspected of attempting to supplant Luther's doctrine on some points by his own.

This opposition to Melanchthon was much increased on account of the part he took in introducing the Interim into Saxony. His most able and most persistent opponent, Flacius, was the most violent and most bitter theological wrangler of that age, and a personal enemy of Melanchthon. Claiming to be the champion of orthodox Lutheranism, he most mercilessly denounced, abused, and persecuted those

who dared to differ from him. Having once conceived the idea, that no one must be tolerated unless he agreed with Luther, and then making his own interpretations of Luther's works authoritative, he used all his learning, his great energy and perseverance, and his intolerance, against those who did not read Luther through the same spectacles, or who had the audacity to act on the supposition that Luther could err. Fleeing from Wittenberg at the introduction of the Interim, he spent some time at Magdeburg, and then became professor at Jena. This university was established by the dukes of Saxony in opposition to the university at Wittenberg. Their reasons were chiefly political. In the Smalcald war they had lost the electorate of Saxony, and in their opposition to the elector they also opposed the university of Wittenberg, which he had reestablished after the war. Melanchthon, being the leading spirit at Wittenberg, was opposed because he took an active part in reestablishing the university, and because his name was its greatest lustre. Whilst therefore Wittenberg was the centre of Melanchthon's authority, Jena became the centre of the Flacian party. Jena was established in the name of Lutheran orthodoxy, and often the basest means were resorted to for the purpose of maintaining this claim and bringing into disrepute the university of Wittenberg.

During Melanchthon's life the Flacian faction indeed continued to grow, but could not gain the supremacy. Not till after his death did they succeed in establishing their views in a large part of the Evangelical Church, and in destroying the authority of Melanchthon, which had been supreme after Luther's death. Melanchthon's followers were called Philippists, Melanchthon himself generally being called by his Christian name, Philip. The Flacian party, however, claimed to be the pure and only Lutherans. That sometimes their zeal for Luther's doctrine was pure, cannot be denied; but too often they disgraced that great name by their intolerance, and violence, and the disgraceful means used in gaining their ends, all of which can only be remembered with sadness, and to which we are chiefly indebted for the unhappy state of the Evangelical Church after Melanchthon's death, and for the divisions

which followed the unchristian disputes of these pugilists.*

The Interim controversy was followed by many others, some of which were much more intimately connected with the doctrines of the Confession. Whilst all these show how little the doctrines of the Evangelical Church were definitely fixed, they also prove the great need of more fully organizing the Church, and of establishing in it a more perfect bond of union.

The Reformation may justly be regarded as an effort to realize the truth of the Apostle's declaration: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." The doctrine of justification by faith, not works, was therefore the cardinal one of the Reformation. The Papists did their utmost to refute this doctrine and to induce the Protestants to abandon it; for they saw that, if it prevailed, it would overthrow their theory of the merit of good works and the many institutions dependent on this theory. Whilst they therefore acknowledged that our salvation depends on God's grace, and that faith is necessary to salvation, they objected to the doctrine that faith only (*sola fides*) is necessary to salvation. Besides faith they wanted the Protestants to teach, that love, hope and good works were also necessary, not thinking that faith, as Paul and Luther used the word, necessarily includes all these. Luther himself had given a clear idea of what he meant by salvation by faith alone. He meant a living faith, with which all the Christian graces are connected, which he however made dependent on faith. He was far from rejecting good works, but he regarded them as a necessary consequence of faith.† Just as it is the nature of the sun to shine, so it is the nature of faith, according to Luther, to produce good works. The difference between Luther and the Papists on this subject was partly owing to their different views of faith.

* For a full account of these disputes the reader is referred to Salig III. and Planck, Prot. Theol., I. and II. They were disputes about religion, but they can hardly be called religious. Whilst the Flacian faction was the most violent and intolerant, the other party also frequently resorted to unjustifiable means.

† Luther says: "Bist du gläubig, so musst du Guts thun."

Luther's view of faith was so Scriptural that, if properly understood, it could not lead to error. But in the reaction against the work-holiness of the papacy, there was danger of going to the other extreme, of preaching a dead faith without works. And during the Reformation the spirit of Antinomianism began to manifest itself. The want of a clear understanding of the intimate relation between faith and practice, led to many disputes among the Protestants themselves, as well as between them and the Papists. Amsdorf actually went so far as to assert that good works were injurious to salvation. The doctrine of justification by faith alone was, therefore, the occasion of dangerous errors, simply because it was not properly understood.

In the Leipzig Interim the doctrine of justification by faith alone was not stated; but the necessity of good works was acknowledged, though the Protestant doctrine was by no means abandoned or compromised by this acknowledgment. This acknowledgment, however, occasioned much offence, and subjected the authors of the Interim to severe attacks. Dr. Major, one of the authors of the Interim and a colleague of Melanchthon at Wittenberg, opposed the Antinomian spirit and declared publicly, that good works were necessary to salvation, that no one was ever saved without good works, and "let him that teaches otherwise, even an angel from heaven, be accursed.*" For this declaration he was severely attacked, was charged with teaching papistical doctrines, and with abandoning the teachings of the Augsburg Confession. He, indeed, declared repeatedly, that he had never meant to teach anything else than that faith could not be without works; but this did not reconcile his enemies, who continued their attacks.† The dispute was principally one of words, but was all the more violent and personal on that account. Sometimes the parties did not understand each other, sometimes they did not want to do so. Major's position was safe enough if taken

* Herzog Ency. Art. Majoristischer Streit.

† Flacius, one of Major's most bitter opponents, acknowledged in a private letter to Anthony Otto, preacher in Nordhausen, that in some respects Major and his party were right; but he did not want this acknowledgment made public, lest the Majorists might be victorious. Salig, III. 61.

in the sense he indicated; but it could be used to advantage by the Papists. Some of his opponents agreed with him in substance, but others advocated the most dangerous Antinomianism.

Another controversy arose on the freedom of the will. Flacius taught that original sin is not a mere quality of man, but really his very substance, so that since the fall the image of God in man has been changed completely into the image of the devil. Accordingly there is not a vestige of freedom left; and in the act of conversion man is pronounced as absolutely passive as a block of wood or a stone. He was opposed by a colleague at Jena, professor Strigel, who argued, that a man cannot indeed commence the work of regeneration, but can resist it, and that the will of man can be coöperative with the divine Spirit.* In this *synergistic* controversy the great question therefore was, whether in the natural man the will is so completely destroyed by original sin that it can neither accept nor resist grace? or whether it still has the power of repelling the Spirit and of coöperating with it? Flacius even condemned the expression used by pastor Hugel in Jena, "That the Father draws us by means of his word, gently and even with cords of love"—because it indicated that our will is still capable of inclining towards the good. But this champion of exclusive Lutheranism was himself afterwards condemned by his own party, for his doctrine that original sin in the fall became the very substance of man.

Andrew Osiander, professor and preacher in Königsberg, taught, with some of the scholastics, that even if man had not fallen, the Son of God, from love to man, would have come into the world. For this assertion, which had no immediate practical bearing, he was publicly denounced from the pulpit, as a heretic and Pelagian. But the doctrine for which he was most severely attacked was contained in his answer to the question, whether we are justified by the entire person of Christ, or only by his human, or his divine nature? His answer was: "by his divine nature," or in other words, by the essential righteousness of God himself, which is imparted unto us through Christ. In the disputes on this subject various views of justification were advocated. His

* Herzog Ency, Art. Concordienformel.

own colleague, Stancarus, went to the opposite extreme, and taught that we are justified exclusively by the human nature of Christ. Albert, duke of Prussia, requested different parties to present their views on the subject.* The answers to his request showed how great the diversity of opinion on the subject. One taught that our justification by faith is exclusively God's work; another, that Christ's death and resurrection are our justification; a third, Christ's obedience; a fourth, His sufferings, death and resurrection; a fifth, God's essential righteousness dwelling in us through Christ.

This controversy, so often merely about scholastic terms and on subjects not clearly revealed, agitated the whole church, but especially the Church in Prussia. It was not confined to books and learned disputes in the universities, but was introduced into the pulpits and thus served to distract the church at large. During his life, Osiander was often attacked unjustly, the basest lies being circulated to injure his character. About his death the most foolish reports were circulated, as well as about the devil's operations with his body in the grave.

Other controversies at this time rent the Evangelical Church,† but by far the most important was that on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Already during Luther's life the doctrine was the subject of much controversy. The concord with the Zwinglians in 1536 for a while restored harmony between the Lutherans and Zwinglians. But the controversy was again renewed by Luther himself shortly before his death. Not, however, till some time after his death did the most violent agitations on this subject commence.‡ In the meanwhile the differences on this subject were not indeed removed, but they were tolerated. And men of different views found no difficulty in adopting the Augsburg Confession which was in general use, namely the altered edition. And it was only when men became intolerant and bigotted, and insisted that all must agree with

* Salig II. 972.

† The controversies on Antinonianism, occasioned by Agricola; on Christ's descent into hell, occasioned by Aepin, in Hamburg; as well as numerous other controversies of that wrangling period, are discussed fully by Salig and Planck. The articles on the various subjects in Herzog give a condensed view of these disputes.

‡ Salig, II. 1074. Planck, Prot. Theol. II., part II., p. 1.

their scholastic definitions, that the controversy on this subject was renewed with a bitterness never before witnessed in the Evangelical Church. So absorbing did it become that other controversies were neglected and lost sight of; and not only was it the most universal and violent controversy of that period, but it also lasted longer and was more fruitful in consequences than any other.

During Luther's life Calvin took no active part in the various controversies on the Lord's Supper, although he had expressed views somewhat different from those of Luther.* But whilst he did not agree with Luther he also opposed the Zwinglians, who, indeed, suspected that he had gone over to the Lutheran view. He, however, took a position between the two parties. During the lull in the controversy, after 1536, he was generally regarded as not differing materially from Luther on this subject. In 1549 he, in connection with Farel, attempted to form a union between the churches of Geneva and Zurich. At a meeting held at the latter place the "Zurich Vergleich" was formed, in which the doctrine of the Lord's Supper was so stated that it was very evident Calvin did not agree with Luther. This became the occasion for renewing the controversy on that subject. Westphal, who was zealously striving to gain the reputation of an orthodox Lutheran, published a work (in 1552) against Calvin's view. He was followed by many others, who thought Luther's doctrine on this subject must be made the test of Lutheran orthodoxy.

It was quite natural that those questions on which the Scriptures are least explicit, should be discussed with the most violence. For the simple language of Scripture scholastic terms were introduced, which were then defended as if they had come down from heaven. Often the merest trifles became the occasion of violent outbursts of passion, and it is a wonder that some questions, which excited much attention, could at all be seriously discussed. In Anspach there was a dispute as to whether the body of Christ, in the Supper, after being eaten, went through the same process as other food.† In 1557 the margrave George Frederick

* Planck, Prot. Theol. II., part II., p. 7-10.

† "An corpus Christi decendat in ventrem?"

actually sent this question to the Protestant theologians, then assembled at the colloquy at Worms, to get their opinion, especially that of Melanchthon. Had the simple words of the Gospel, without human addition, been made the standard of soundness, all Evangelical Christians could have stood on this basis; but the nicest distinctions were made, on which parties were then based and controversies commenced. One would say, the body of Christ is in the bread; another, it is in a little particle of bread. Some wanted a distinction made between Christ's body and flesh. In expressing the relation of Christ to the bread and wine various prepositions were used. Some preferred the Latin preposition *in*, others wanted *sub*, others *cum*; some wanted to retain all these without deciding in favor of either, while others wanted still more prepositions added to them. And sometimes a preposition became the watchword of a party, and those who would not adopt it to the exclusion of all others, were denounced and even persecuted. Besides the mode, the nature of Christ's presence in the Supper was also fully discussed, and the effort made to fix it definitely. One preferred the use of the word *substantialiter* to indicate the nature of his presence; another advocated *realiter*; a third *definitive*; a fourth *corporaliter*.*

The exclusive Lutherans wanted Luther's views and words on the doctrine adopted. With him they insisted that in the communion the wicked as well as believers receive the body of Christ; whilst the conditions for the worthy celebration of the Supper were often sadly neglected. Many who boasted of their Lutheran orthodoxy were willing to associate with all who agreed with them on this point, whatever their life might be; but if any one denied that the wicked also received Christ's body, no matter how pious he might be, he was denounced as a Zwinglian, a Calvinist, a Sacramentarian, and in many instances was violently persecuted. In their extreme desire to be *sound*, some approached very near the Romanists, both in doctrine and practice. At Hildesheim one of the pastors, Krag by name, accidentally dropped a wafer during communion; as it was not broken, he picked it up and gave it to the com-

* Salig, III., 456.

municant. Some were greatly offended at this, because he did not reconsecrate the wafer and kiss it. It was taught by some, that if a drop of wine fell on the garment of any one, the spot thereby made must be cut out and burned; and to legitimate the orthodoxy of this practice, Luther was appealed to as having done the same thing. The people were also instructed in some places, that if the blood of Christ fell on their beards it must not be wiped off.* Some also taught that during communion the words of the institution must be whispered into the ear of the communicant, because this was done at Wittenberg. By some a kind of adoration of the elements was practiced, which was but a logical deduction from their views of Christ's presence. Against such superstitions Krag preached, and for his opposition to them he soon gained the reputation of not being orthodox, was called a Sacramentarian, was violently opposed by the orthodox party, and was finally expelled from the city.

None of the parties who engaged in the controversy can be commended for their Christian charity or mildness; but in acrimony and in intolerance the party regarding itself as purely Lutheran surpassed all the rest. It need not be stated that they often signally disgraced that name, and that the immortal reformer would have disowned them. For the justification of their violence they, however, appealed to Luther himself. Westphal, Flacius, Hesshusen, and their faction, regarded themselves as his genuine followers, and as called on to maintain his doctrines; and those who dared differ from them were refused all ecclesi-

* The superstitions respecting the Lord's Supper were in many instances of such a character as to rival those in the Romish church. "In Rostock, pastor Reiche demanded that the men should have their beards cut off before communion, lest Christ's blood might adhere to it. In Hildesheim it was ordered that the hair of the beard to which a drop of the consecrated wine had adhered, must be pulled out and preserved. In Breslau the ground on which a drop had fallen from the chalice was scratched out and carefully preserved." In Hesse some preachers used reeds or small tubes through which the wine was drawn by the communicants, so that Christ's blood might not be spilled. Heppel II. 368-391, where still other instances of the grossest superstition in connection with this ordinance are given.

astical fellowship. Their own words were treated by themselves as God's oracles. When they were persecuted they called themselves the exiles of Christ; but when they persecuted others, then it was done in the name of Luther and of pure orthodoxy.

The effects of these controversies on the Evangelical church were of the most disastrous kind. So intent were the theologians on establishing their views and destroying each other, that they had no time nor inclination to take care of the souls committed to their charge. Books, and the universities, and pulpits were devoted so entirely to the disputes, that the food most of all needed by the soul was neglected. The passions excited by the fierce contest drove from the heart emotions of a milder and more heavenly character. Vital piety was greatly on the decrease, because men had not time to attend to it. Church-discipline was sadly neglected. A gross neglect of duty and even immoral conduct were often less severely reprimanded than the failure fully to apprehend and implicitly believe all the nice distinctions which were regarded essential to genuine Lutheran orthodoxy. So rent into factions was the church that there was no unity of action; and so eager were these factions to crush one another that they turned all their weapons against each other, and not, as was formerly the case, against their common foe, the papacy. From the distractions in the Evangelical church Rome reaped the greatest harvest. The progress of the Reformation was effectually checked; indeed, the Evangelical church was already losing territory once under the sway of the Gospel. Through these unhappy dissensions, and through the untiring zeal of the Jesuits, whole countries were won back again to Romanism. Rome used the different factions to do its work, and they did it more effectually than her united power could have done it.* And the faction which claimed

* In 1561 a colloquy was held at Poissy, near Paris, between the Papists and Huguenots. The Papists sent to Germany for some of the exclusive and intolerant men who arrogated to themselves the Lutheran name. The following reason was given for this act which, whether true or not, gives a good idea of the reputation of that fanatical faction at that time. The Papists, it is said, hoped to use the Lutherans in disputing with the Huguenots, who on the doc-

to be the most orthodox, not only encouraged the Papists in their persecutions, but actually gave them lessons.* And as the factions were doing the work of the papacy in destroying each other, Rome encouraged the dissensions and the violence of the different parties.†

The more pious members of the Evangelical church, those who were not so absorbed by abstractions as to neglect a Christian life, looked with much regret on the disastrous consequences of the wrath of the theologians; and many earnest efforts, private and public, individual and collective, were made for the purpose of restoring peace. The Flacian party was the most difficult to pacify, and their intolerance and obstinacy generally made all efforts to restore peace useless. It was found impossible to get a basis of union on which all the parties could stand harmoniously. The Flacians insisted that they were the only true Lutherans, and perfect doctrinal agreement with them, especially on points on which they had had controversy

trine of the Lord's Supper were Calvinistic. It was expected and desired by the Papists that the imported exclusivists would attack the Huguenots with their usual violence, and thus bring both themselves and the Huguenots into disgrace and promote the destruction of both. A number of German theologians obeyed the summons; but when they arrived the colloquy was already ended. Salig, III., 830.

* "It is said that Francis I., King of France, replied to a German ambassador, who complained of the cruel persecutions in France and interceded in behalf of the persecuted, as follows—that those persecuted were heretics, who denied the real and bodily presence of Christ in the Supper. And, he continued, these are persecuted by the Lutherans in Germany in the most barbarous manner (und diese verfolgten ja die Lutheraner in Teutschland aufs grausamste), and that he had learned his cruelty from the Protestants. To this the ambassador could not reply a word." Salig, III. 658—taken from the confession of the Wittenberg theologians, on the Lord's Supper, of 1560.

† For the distractions in the Evangelical church at that time we are probably more indebted to Rome than is generally supposed. It feared the united strength of Protestantism and did its utmost to prevent a harmonious union. The secret instructions of the pope to his nuncio sent to the diet at Spire, in 1540, show how much a union between Lutherans and Zwinglians was deprecated, and what hopes were founded by Rome on the division of the Evangelical church. Salig, IV., part I., p. 212.

with others, was made by them the condition of fellowship. The Augsburg Confession was the common confession of Protestantism, and the freedom generally allowed in its interpretation made it possible for men of the various parties to stand on it as a common basis. By many it was not regarded as full and explicit enough, especially on the controverted points; hence, it was quite common to adopt besides it other confessions. Whilst the Augsburg Confession was thus generally accepted in the Evangelical church, there was no uniformity respecting other confessions, different countries and churches often using different confessions with the Augsburg Confession. Especially where men insisted on perfect agreement in scholastic definitions was the insufficiency of the Augsburg Confession as a basis of union felt. The adoption of the Confession in the sense that was common during the Reformation, was by no means satisfactory to those who were intolerant of all doctrinal differences, whether on essentials or on non-essentials. The question was not so much, whether the Augsburg Confession should be accepted? for its acceptance was general in the Evangelical church; but the great question was, how shall that Confession be interpreted? During the Reformation Melanchthon's altered editions were generally accepted as the true interpretation of the Confession, even by the very men who afterwards most bitterly opposed those alterations and Melanchthon himself. The Philippists followed Melanchthon's authority in their interpretation of the Confession, and with the altered Confession and Apology they frequently published his *Loci* and some of his other works as confessional writings. But the Flacian party opposed Melanchthon and his interpretations of the Confession, and thus opposed the general practice of the Evangelical church during the Reformation. One of their chief grounds of opposition to the altered Confession was, that Sacramentarians, Majorists, and others, whom the Flacians had opposed, could adopt the altered Confession. They therefore insisted on the restoration of the unaltered Confession and the rejection of the altered. But the unaltered Confession was not regarded as sufficient to insure the doctrinal sameness they desired, for some might adopt it whom they regarded as errorists. Rejecting Melanchthon's interpreta-

tion of the Confession in his altered editions, they wanted to establish orthodox Lutheranism by interpreting the Confession by the unaltered Apology and the writings of Luther, especially his Catechisms and the Smalcald Articles. And so exclusive and intolerant did the Flacian Lutheranism become, that all who did not interpret the creeds as they did, were excommunicated. And Melancthon and his friends and adherents became the objects of their most violent hate, so that they could not find epithets severe enough to vent their feelings towards him whom Luther had not only tolerated, but dearly loved. Fighting under the banner of an exclusive and bigoted Lutheranism (if Lutheranism at all), they pretended to be the defenders of the (exclusive) authority of Luther in opposition to that of Melancthon.*

The various efforts made to restore peace to the Evangelical church, were generally directed to the restoration of harmony between the Philippists (those who sided with the university of Wittenberg, with Melancthon as their leader), and the Flacians (those who sided with the university of Jena, with Flacius at their head). For these two parties, in the various controversies that agitated the church, generally took opposite sides,† and if they could have been united peace would have been restored. And for twenty years numerous efforts were made to reconcile these two parties.

As early as 1556 efforts were made by various princes as well as theologians to induce Wittenberg and the Flacians to

* The aim and spirit of the Flacians explained their efforts to invalidate the authority of the altered editions of the Confession, as well as their slanders respecting Melancthon's motives in making the alterations, and about the opposition of Luther, the elector of Saxony and others, to his alterations. But these men had not the audacity to deprive Melancthon of the honor of being the author of the Confession—for its authorship was too well known yet. Had they believed Luther was the author of the Confession—what an argument that would have been against Melancthon's alterations!

† The controversies with Osiander and Schwenkfeld are excepted, both of them being opposed by these two parties. But in the other controversies they were opposed to each other. Indeed, the fact that a cause was advocated by one party was a sufficient ground for the other to oppose it. Planck, Prot. Theol. III., 8.

cease their hostilities. Nothing would have been more gratifying to the peace-loving Melancthon; but the Flacians insisted on such humiliating conditions that he could not accept them. But so disastrous were the consequences of the distractions in the church that in 1557 earnest efforts were again made by a number of princes to unite the antagonistic parties. A colloquy was to be held the first of August that year, at Worms, with the Papists, for the purpose of once more trying to form a union between them and the Protestants. And it was feared that, if the Protestants were not united at this colloquy, still more disastrous results might flow from their divisions. An assembly of Protestant princes and theologians was accordingly held at Frankfurt to determine what course to pursue with reference to the colloquy to be held at Worms.* It was here decided to make the Augsburg Confession the basis of the colloquy, and it was also declared in the recess of the convention, that all the theologians present at the convention at Frankfurt "had obligated themselves that they would always teach according to the sacred Scriptures, the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, and that they would reject all that was contrary to them, but with this condition, that they do not place the Augsburg Confession and its Apology above the Scriptures, nor beside it (equal to it)."[†] But in less than a month after the meeting Flacius wrote

* The aim of the convention was not to condemn any one, but to restore peace and again direct the attention of the church to living piety. The Flacian party, whose camp was still at Magdeburg, was not at this convention, but they sent a request that they might not be condemned unheard. Contention and condemnation had become so natural to them, that they could not imagine how a religious convention could be held at which some one was not to be denounced and condemned. And as they were at the bottom of most of the quarrels, and as all efforts to quiet them had failed, they naturally feared that the convention would condemn them as the party who made all peaceful efforts useless.

Salig, III. 260, says of these men, who objected to every convention that did not consign some one to perdition: "They were the very men who had commenced and instigated all the disasters in the church, and who, by means of their writings, caused the greatest disturbances in the church."

[†] Planck, Prot. Theol., III., 122. Heppe, Deut. Prot., I., p. 153. Salig, III., 271.

and circulated a violent attack against the decisions of the assembly. He and his party were opposed to the results arrived at, because the errorists were not condemned, not even the Sacramentarians, whom Luther, as they alleged, had most loudly condemned, and also because the Smalcald Articles had not been adopted.

There was thus no hope of forming a union among the Protestants before the collocutors met at Worms. There the Flacians again demanded that the Smalcald Articles, as well as the Confession and Apology, should be made the basis of the colloquy. And before they were willing to act with the other Evangelical theologians at the colloquy, they wanted them to condemn all whom the Flacians regarded as errorists.* And because their wishes were not complied with they did their utmost to break up the colloquy, and finally withdrew altogether, to the no little chagrin of the other Evangelical theologians, who regretted that thus another occasion was given the Papists to glory in the distractions in the Protestant church.

Another convention was held at Frankfurt in 1558 for the purpose of pacifying the various parties; but its efforts were also fruitless. The next convention of Evangelical princes for the same purpose was held at Naumburg, in the beginning of 1561. In point of numbers and importance this convention surpassed all that preceded it. The various princes who regarded themselves as adherents to the Augsburg Confession had been invited, and many appeared in person, some sent representatives, others excuses for their absence. Philip of Hesse and Wolfgang of Anhalt were the only survivors of the confessors at Augsburg; the former was present at the convention, and the latter was represented. It was thought that the best way to restore peace to the Church would be to sign the Augsburg Confession anew. But what edition of the Confession should be signed?

* They wanted the following sects and heresies condemned: 1, All sects and factions of the Anabaptists; 2, All sects of the Zwinglians and Sacramentarians; 3, The heretical doctrine of Osiander; 4, The doctrine of Major, of the necessity of good works; 5, Schwenkfeld's errors; 6, The Servetians; 7, All who had accepted the Interim and were unwilling to acknowledge and repent of their error in doing so. Heppe, I., p. 159.

The altered editions of 1540 and 1542 were the ones commonly in use; but the fierce attacks on these by the Flacian party had called attention to the differences between the original and altered editions. The importance attached to these differences and the opposition by that party to the altered Confession seemed strange to the vast majority of Lutherans, because they were accustomed to look on the alterations as mere improvements and explanations of the original. With astonishment Frederick, the elector of the Palatinate, had lately heard in a dispute at Heidelberg, that the editions commonly used were not genuine, but that the original Confession ought to be adopted. And he wrote an autograph letter to the landgrave of Hesse indicating his surprise at such an assertion, and requesting him to send a copy of the original.* So little was the difference between the editions recognized, that some of the princes hardly knew what was meant by the question: Which edition of the Confession shall be signed?† But at the first meeting of the convention this question was proposed. A careful collation of the different editions, which took three days, was necessary to decide what the differences were. The views differed as to which edition should be signed. Some favored the signing of the original, others that of 1540,‡ while those under the influence of the Flacian party

* Heppe, Deut. Prot. I., 376.

† Heppe, 377.

‡ The elector of the Palatinate strongly favored the signing of the altered edition. He was particularly opposed to signing the German Confession, because he believed it to teach the papistical doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Nor did he want to subscribe the declaration in the Confession that the mass had not been abolished, because he had abolished it with all its papal ceremonies. The new preface to the Confession, adopted and signed by the convention, guarded carefully against these two errors by stating, that the signers "thought it necessary to place safeguards around several articles, especially those respecting the Lord's Supper and the Mass, since in the first edition of the Confession, and at the beginning of the Reformation, these articles had been expressed in the very mildest terms, and consequently could be interpreted to their own advantage by the adversaries, as if they agreed with their idolatrous doctrines and ceremonies, especially with the abomination of transubstantiation." Planck, Prot. Theol. III., p. 242.

avored the adoption of the Smalcald Articles as well as the original Confession. It was finally decided to sign the first edition, the principal reason being that thus they could best refute the arguments of the Papists that they were constantly changing their doctrines. To convince the emperor of their present unanimity, it was decided to add a new preface to the Confession, and present the same to the emperor. In this new preface they give their reason (given above) for signing the original Confession, and not the edition of 1540, which was more "elegant and more explicit, and which had been explained and enlarged on the basis of the Scriptures." But the preface also states that they do not in the least abandon the altered editions of 1540 and 1542, which represent the truth more fully and clearly than the original, and which were commonly in use. And to avoid the charge of teaching the Romish doctrines of transubstantiation and the mass, they distinctly reject these errors in the preface.

The preface was adopted by the convention and was signed by the princes present, except John Frederick, duke of Saxony, and Ulrich, duke of Mecklenburg, who were dissatisfied with it, because it condemned no one.* All the

*The Flacian theologians used their influence to induce the princes to condemn what they regarded as errors, in spite of the fact that in the letters inviting the princes to the convention it was stated that the different parties should not be allowed to condemn each other. But the convention refused to heed the request of the Flacians. These same theologians, who controlled the duke of Saxony, used their influence to prevent the recognition of any but the original Confession; but this faction had so little influence that their desire, in this respect, was as little heeded as their anxiety to have a long list of what they regarded as errors and heresies condemned. Equally futile was their attempt to secure the adoption of the Smalcald Articles.

The Jena theologians of the Flacian party in their address sent to the princes at Naumburg, tried to excuse themselves for being such intolerable wranglers. They claimed that the heresies in the church were the occasion of their zeal in controversy. They argued in the address, that the church must be purified, the weeds must be rooted out. On account of these heresies God had already manifested his wrath in a fearful thunderstorm. Another evidence of his wrath was, that in the neighborhood a person had been possessed with the devil. And if the pure doctrines were not guarded, still stronger evidences would be given, as the coming of the Turks, etc. Salig, III., 675.

efforts of the other princes to induce the duke of Saxony to accept the preface were unavailing, and in the beginning of February he secretly left Naumburg for Weimar. Thus the imperial and papal ambassadors, who had arrived at Naumburg, had another striking illustration of the divisions in the Evangelical church, at the very convention called for the purpose of restoring peace.

This convention, held at the very beginning of the post-Reformation period, shows the status of the Evangelical church at that time respecting the confessions of the church. The vast majority of the church accepted the Augsburg Confession as Melancthon himself had interpreted it in the altered editions and in the altered Apology. Even at that time, after the Reformation, the original edition was not in general use, and it was scarcely known. There were indeed different views as to the meaning of the Confession on some points; but the majority in the church were willing to tolerate differences on non-essentials, if there was only unity on the great fundamentals. For this reason they refused to condemn Zwinglians, Calvinists, Majorists, and others, with whom the Flacians would hold no fellowship. Efforts were made at this convention to secure the adoption of the Smalcald Articles, but they failed. The men who regarded the altered edition of the Confession as the correct interpretation of the original, were unwilling to adopt the Smalcald Articles as a confession of the church.

But at this same convention the aim and spirit of the Flacian party were manifested. They were, indeed, regarded as a mere faction of incorrigible wranglers, who had no peace while those who differed from them were at peace; and the convention treated them and their requests with deserved neglect, if not with contempt. They wanted mathematical doctrinal unity; hence, a creed that admitted of different interpretations, even on subjects of minor importance, was not to their purpose. Could they have been brought to tolerate differences on subjects they had disputed on, then their occupation would have been gone, and the faction itself would have expired. Hence, they insisted on the explicit rejection and condemnation of all whom they regarded as errorists. And, in order that there might be no fellowship with these in the future, they wanted a creed

adopted on which none could stand except those who agreed with them on disputed points. Sometimes they made their own creed, which they then attempted to force on others.* As Calvinists and others, whom they rejected, could adopt the altered Confession, they insisted on its rejection; one principal reason, besides this, being, that Melancthon, whom they so orthodoxly hated, had made the alterations. Nothing would do but the original Confession, and Apology, and the Smalcald Articles; the latter especially being insisted on as giving Luther's interpretation of the Augsburg Confession.

The convention at Naumburg acted on the principle that Christian tolerance and liberty ought to be exercised towards those who differ from us; but this was the very principle the Flacians most of all opposed. Had that principle been universally accepted, then the results of the convention would have been favorable. Its peaceful efforts were, however, frustrated by the intolerant and exclusive party, whose bitterness and violence were increased by the very leniency of the convention. And instead of securing its aim, the restoration of peace in the Evangelical church, the convention became the occasion of still more distraction and violence in the church.

The new preface was sent to the various Evangelical princes who had not been at Naumburg, for the purpose of securing their signatures. The theologians who opposed the preface because it condemned no one, used their influence against its acceptance by the princes, some of whom refused to sign it. Some of the princes declared that "they would not consent to give their signatures until they had been assured that the Augsburg Confession was understood by all the subscribers in the sense in which Dr. Luther had held and explained all the articles, and that all the editions of the Confession were to be explained by the first, and not the first by the later ones into which alterations had crept from which had arisen many errors."† Others

* As the "Confutationsbuch," which the Flacians introduced into the duchy of Saxony, often using the most disgraceful means to secure its adoption. It was by them made the test of Lutheran orthodoxy.

† Planck, Prot. Theol., III., 284.

wanted to accept the Augsburg Confession only as explained by the Smalcald Articles. The theologians of Lubeck, Hamburg and Luneburg met at Mollen for the purpose of deciding, whether the cities they represented should sign the preface or not. They objected to the signing, and insisted that the Augsburg Confession must be adopted as explained by the Smalcald Articles and Luther's Catechisms; but if the electors and princes insisted that the Confession, with the new preface, should be signed by the cities, it could only be done on the condition that "all errors opposed to the Confession, its Apology, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Catechisms, the Refutation issued by these cities against the Interim, and to other common and approved confessions of these cities, should not be tolerated, but rejected by means of their signatures."* At Luneburg a larger convention was held, both of theologians and secular delegates from various cities, at which it was decided, that "the Augsburg Confession alone was not sufficient as a doctrinal basis; but only in connection with the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Catechisms and his other writings, would the Confession form a practical doctrinal basis."† In this and other instances the exclusive party proved that they did not regard the Confession alone sufficient. They feared that even the original might be so interpreted as to make it possible for some to adopt it with whom they did not want to fellowship. Hence, to insure Lutheran exclusive orthodoxy, all the writings of Luther, together with the Confession and its Apology, must be made the doctrinal basis of the church to which they were willing to belong.

As is so often the case, the various efforts to restore peace in the church only served to widen the breach and to convince the different parties that their differences were irreconcilable. In the midst of the peace-movements the opinions diverged more and more, and the bitterness of the hostile parties increased. Heretofore the efforts to restore peace had been made chiefly through conventions of theologians and princes. What they had failed to accomplish by their united influence a single individual now attempted to perform. This man was Jacob Andrea, professor and

* Planck, III., 287-288.

† Planck, III., 289. Salig, I., 701.

preacher in Tübingen. His learning and character were well calculated to fit him for the difficult task.* He commenced the work in 1567, at the instigation of Christopher, duke of Wurtemberg, who had already made various efforts to reconcile the conflicting views, but without success.

The aim of Andrea was to reconcile the exclusive orthodox party and the Philippists, without regard to the other factions that had arisen. If these two parties could be united, the other disturbing elements in the church could either be suppressed or they would be so weak as to cause but little disturbance. Andrea thought that the best means for the restoration of harmony would be to draw up articles on the principal subjects of dispute and secure the signatures of both parties. His first draft of a formula of concord consisted of only five articles, which treated of those subjects which had occasioned the greatest controversies, namely, justification by faith, good works, freedom of the will, matters of indifference called *Adiaphora*, and the Lord's Supper.† These articles were intended as a common basis for both parties, and their acceptance was to be the end of controversy. All charges of error and condemnations were omitted, so as to awaken no disagreeable recollections of the old feuds, and to make the acceptance easier for both parties.‡ By a brief statement of what was regarded as essential, while carefully avoiding the extremes into which both parties had run, Andrea hoped to satisfy the disputants. But as is usual in such cases, neither party was satisfied with his production. He travelled in 1569 through a large part of Germany to use his personal influence with theologians and secular authorities to secure the adoption of his articles. The exclusive orthodox party did not find in the formula their favorite doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body, which alone was to them sufficient ground for rejecting it. But a still graver objection

* "Andrea was a man rich in knowledge, of persevering industry, of impulsive eloquence, full of fire and life as a preacher, chiefly practical as a lecturer, and skillful and persuasive in negotiations." Herzog—Art. Jacob Andrea.

† Planck, III., 377. 381–388. Heppe, II., 251–254.

‡ How different this ideal from that which was afterwards realized in the Formula of Concord!

was, that the formula stated merely what was to be believed, and not what was to be rejected and condemned. True to their past history, they were unwilling to sign the articles unless the supposed errors, with which they had constantly charged the Philippists, were distinctly stated and condemned. The Philippists, on the other hand, were unwilling to enter into any peaceable arrangement unless Melancthon's system of doctrines (*corpus doctrinæ*), which they had recognized, was adopted. Nor could they accept the articles themselves, since their doctrine, that the will is coöperative in conversion, was denied; and they also objected to the fifth article, according to which the unbeliever receives the body and blood of Christ in the Supper as well as the believer.

But the rejection of his formula did not discourage Andrea. From 1568 till 1571 he was incessant in his efforts to accomplish his aim. By means of personal intercourse and letters he obtained the opinions of various parties as to the best course to be pursued. In May, 1570, a conference of theologians of the different parties was held at Zerbst, for the purpose of forming some basis of union. The framing and adoption of articles as a formula of concord was proposed; but as this might look as if they wanted to make a new confession, the plan was abandoned. But it was resolved to come, if possible, to an agreement, as to which of the existing confessions should be recognized. Andrea was appointed to prepare a statement on this subject. In his report it is stated that the three œcumenical creeds, the Augsburg Confession, the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, and the Catechisms of Luther, are regarded as a correct interpretation of Scripture, according to which creeds Luther's writings, as well as those of Melancthon and Brentz, are to be interpreted.* Melancthon was only mentioned to please the Wittenberg theologians; and to counteract the dissatisfaction which this mention of Melancthon would cause among the Flacians, Brentz was mentioned, whose mention, however, dissatisfied the theologians of the electorate of Saxony. And whilst the report made the explanation of Scripture dependent on the creeds mentioned, the

* Heppé, II., 810.

theologians of the electorate of Saxony declared "that they regarded the Word of God as the only rule of the divine doctrine, and that, consequently, all the writings mentioned in the report must be judged and explained according to the Scriptures."*

The efforts to form a basis at Zerbst which should satisfy all parties, were as fruitless as those made at former conventions. Andrea was not a little mortified to find that his earnest, sincere, and persevering labors had thus far all failed. It now became evident to him that there was no hope of uniting the two parties, and that peace could only be restored by crushing one party and making the other victorious. Events that transpired in the electorate of Saxony aided Andrea in determining which party to favor, though already his inclination led him to side more with the Flacians than with the Philippists. The elector of Saxony, who for a long time supposed that his theologians were true to Luther's doctrines in spite of their adherence to Melancthon, became convinced that the Philippists had actually abandoned some of Luther's views. They were suspected of being Crypto-Calvinists. As he was determined to restore to his country what was regarded as pure Lutheranism, he resorted to violent measures in 1574. Some of the Philippists renounced their views, others were banished, while still others were imprisoned, some even for life.†

This suppression of Philippism in its stronghold prepared the way for the triumph of the exclusive Lutheran party. Andrea now devoted himself to their interest. Whilst heretofore he had aimed to form a union between the two parties, his efforts were now directed to form a basis of union chiefly in the interest of those who maintained Luther's authority to the exclusion of that of Melancthon, and who claimed to be the only orthodox Lutherans. In 1573 he had delivered six sermons in Tübingen, on the controversies

* Heppe, II., 310. The report of the theologians of the electorate of Saxony says that they declared: "Dass wir Gottes Wort für eine einige Richtschnur göttlicher Lehre hielten, also alle scripta, deren in dieser Schrift gedacht, nach derselben müssten gerichtet und erörtert, und also von uns sämmtlich angenommen werden."

† Planck, III., 412. Heppe, II., 416-445.

which had rent the Church since 1548. These sermons were sent by him to Chemnitz in Brunswick and to Chytræus in Rostock, stating that he thought he had presented the true doctrines in them, and requested that the sermons should be presented to the churches and should be signed as a basis of union.* But to this basis various objections were made, and the sermons were not regarded as the best form for such a basis. Andrea therefore drew from the sermons a number of articles explanatory of the controversies, and gave an explanation of each controverted point which was to be signed, together with a rejection of errors—so that the new formula of concord contained both theses and antitheses, differing in this respect from the preceding formulas.

This new formula of concord was earnestly recommended by Chemnitz and Chytræus, who used their utmost exertions to secure its adoption. But they only succeeded in getting the opinions of the theologians of lower Saxony and other countries, not their subscription. The objections to the formula and the various suggestions made in reply to the requests to the theologians to sign it, induced Chemnitz and Chytræus so to alter it that an entirely new formula was thus prepared.† The new formula was again sent to different parties, by some of whom it was accepted, as by the theologians of lower Saxony; but others still hesitated. In its new form the formula was also sent back to Andrea to secure its adoption in Wurtemberg. The Wurtemberg theologians were not, however, satisfied with it, therefore two of their number, Lucus Osiander and Balthasar Bidenbach, were requested to bring it into a different shape. The formula thus produced was examined by theologians from Wurtemberg, Henneberg, and Baden, the 19th of January 1576, and by them was adopted and signed.‡ Both the Maulbronn formula and the Sächsisch-Schwäbische Concordie

* Planck, III., 406.

† Planck, III., 417. This new formula was called the "Schwäbisch-Sächsische Concordie," or "Formula concordiæ inter Suevicas et Saxonicas ecclesias." The entire Formula is given by Heppe, III., Beilagen, p. 75.

‡ This was done at a cloister at Maulbronn, and consequently the formula was commonly called the "Maulbronnische Formel." Planck, III., 429.

were sent to the elector of Saxony, for his approval, about the same time. Not knowing which to prefer, he requested the opinion of Andrea on the subject, who advised the calling of a convention of theologians to consider the two formulas. This plan was adopted by the elector, and in May, 1576, the convention was held in Torgau. There were present at this convention Chemnitz, Chytræus, Andrea, Andrew Musculus, Christopher Körner, and twelve theologians from upper Saxony.* They were to compare the two formulas mentioned above, and from the two they were to prepare a new formula. In ten days their work was finished, and the formula was called the Torgau Book.

In this Torgau Book the three œcumenical creeds, the "first, unaltered Augsburg Confession," the Apology, the Smalcald Articles and Luther's Catechisms were adopted as confessions. In twelve articles various subjects of controversy were explained; the doctrine adopted was stated, and the doctrines in conflict therewith were rejected. The articles treated of the following subjects: Original sin, Freedom of the will, Justification by faith, Good works, the Law and the Gospel, the third use of the Law, the Lord's Supper, the Person of Christ, Christ's descent into hell, Adiaphora, Eternal foreknowledge and election; and the last article treated of the various factions and sects which had never professed to adopt the Augsburg Confession.†

As long as there was any hope of forming a union between the Philippists and the exclusive Lutherans, Melancthon's name had been honorably mentioned in the various formulas of concord. Even in the Suavian-Saxon formula this was the case. But in the Torgau Book Melancthon's name and services received no recognition whatever.‡ Some of the doctrines defended by him and his followers were rejected, and the opposite doctrines were taught. The free-

* Planck, III., 448.

† Hepe, III., 106. Although the Torgau Book was changed before it was adopted as the Formula of Concord, the subjects and arrangement of the articles are retained in the latter.

‡ Chemnitz in a letter to Hesshusen boasted that in the Torgau Book the mention of Melancthon's books was avoided. "Mentio librorum Philippi expuncta est." Hepe, III., 118.

dom of the will was denied, and the ubiquity of Christ's body was taught. And the whole Book indicated that the aim was no longer to conciliate or win Melancthon's friends and followers, but merely to form a basis for the exclusive Lutheran orthodoxy.

The friends of the Book were sanguine in their expectations. They thought that after so many years of earnest effort the conditions for permanent peace and union were at last found. Confident of its acceptance they sent it to various princes and theologians for their approval. Andrea again used all his influence to secure its adoption. Within the space of three months more than twenty conventions of theologians were held to consider the adoption of the Book.* But the hearty approval anticipated was not given. Many objections were found to it, and till these were removed some refused peremptorily to sign it. Others approved of the Book conditionally. Some hyper-orthodox Lutherans were not satisfied with the fact that Melancthon's memory was entirely ignored; they wanted him and other supposed errorists mentioned by name and explicitly condemned.† They thought the Book entirely too mild and wanted it spiced with more acrimony towards those whom they had denounced most mercilessly. But this was not all. They wanted the subscription to the Book to be of such a character as to secure perfect agreement with its contents. They wanted to make the formula of concord absolutely binding. The theologians of Brunswick consequently wanted this obligation to be obligatory on all who accepted the Book, "that henceforth in all the churches and schools the teaching, preaching, writing, and disputing should be conformed entirely to the teachings of the new formula, both in thesis and in antithesis, and that no one should be allowed to defend, palliate, or cover the errors and corruptions therein rejected." They accordingly wanted a uniform

* Planck, III., 458.

† This was the case with the theologians of Brunswick, Hamburg, Lubeck, and Luneburg. They wanted mentioned, in the Book, the books in which there were doctrines contrary to those in the Torgau Book; and they insisted that such books and their authors must be condemned. Without this the triumph of their exclusivism would not be complete. Planck, III., 461, 466-468.

formula of subscription adopted, "so that each one in his subscription would have to confess that he approved the formula of concord throughout, with his heart, his mouth, and his pen, in thesis and in antithesis, and that he intended, in his sphere of labors, to preach, teach, write, dictate, or advocate nothing, either publicly or privately, which does not agree with this formula, or which is against it." And these same men advocated the passage of a law prohibiting the publication of all theological books unless it was proved by a rigid censorship that they were perfectly in harmony with the formula of concord.* Similar were the demands of the theologians of Hamburg, Lubeck, and Luneburg, who also wanted the aid of the secular power to introduce the formula and to secure strict conformity with its teachings.† And all this was demanded in the name of Luther, and by men who pretended to be his only true followers!

But the spirit of the Reformation was not yet so completely lost as to make such views universal in the Lutheran church. A Synod of Hessian theologians, held in Cassel, objected to the Torgau Book, that in it the unaltered Augsburg Confession was repeatedly referred to, with the evident intention of making the later editions appear as corruptions of the original, from which charge the majority of the princes assembled at Naumburg had solemnly declared those editions to be free. They wanted both Luther and Melancthon recognized. The Anhalt theologians expressed their apprehensions that the effort was made in the Book "to sever the two heroes, Luther and Philip, to canonize the one and degrade the other, and in his degradation seek personal honor."‡ The theologians of Pommerania also wanted the improved editions of the Augsburg Confession acknowledged, and they, as well as the theologians of Hesse, found it objectionable in the Torgau Book, that in it all Luther's writings were made symbolical.§ In Holstein and Magdeburg the Book was also rejected on account of its evident hostility to Melancthon, whose authority and

* Planck, III., 461-463.

† Planck, III., 469-471.

‡ Herzog, Art. Concordienformel, p. 94.

§ Planck, III., 475. Heppe, IIL., 149.

teachings were held in too high esteem to be contemptuously set aside.*

The result of the efforts to secure the adoption of the Torgau Book was, the conviction that it was not adapted to be the basis of peace and union. It satisfied none of the parties in the church. For the most violent of the exclusive party it was not severe enough in its condemnations. Others who were recognized as Lutherans were unwilling to do Melancthon the great injustice of entirely ignoring him. Besides this, they had heretofore recognized his system of doctrines,† as well as the altered Confession; and if now they accepted the new Book, they would have to renounce their faith, break with their past history, and adopt a new system of faith. By acknowledging Melancthon's services, and by regarding him as Germany's teacher, they thought they did nothing inconsistent with genuine Lutheranism. All these reasons, and of course still others, were urged against the Book by the Philippists.

After the reception of the various opinions respecting the Torgau Book, Andrea advised the elector of Saxony to appoint a committee of three, consisting of himself, Chemnitz, and Selnecker, for the purpose of considering the various criticisms and making in the Book the alterations which might be found necessary. The committee was appointed, and met the first of March, 1577, at the cloister of Bergen, near Magdeburg. As the violent, exclusive party were the most difficult to reconcile, most of the alterations

* In various other quarters the Torgau Book met with the most decided opposition, because in it Melancthon was entirely ignored. Lewis, prince electoral of Heidelberg, was expected to give his unqualified approval of the Book, which was sent to him by the elector of Saxony. But his rejection was unconditional. In giving his view of the Book, he calls attention to the fact "that from the beginning most of the Evangelical theologians and states had professed adherence to no other Corpus doctrinæ than the Holy Scriptures, the three symbols, and the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, and that besides these some had also adopted Melancthon's *Loci communes* and his *Corpus doctrinæ*." He was also surprised that the *Variata* of 1540, and the *Repetition* of the Confession of 1551, which had always been regarded in the electorate of Saxony as a pure interpretation of the original Confession, were rejected in the Book. Heppé, III., 166, 167.

† Planck, III., 525.

made here were in their interest. The expressions in the Torgau Book which might be interpreted to savor of Melancthon's system of doctrines, were expunged,* though the desire of the extreme party to have Melancthon explicitly condemned was not complied with, out of consideration for the more moderate party. As there was neither inclination nor hope of conciliating the Philippists, no concessions were made in their favor. In two weeks their work was done, and the 14th of March the elector was notified of the result. But soon after this first meeting another was held at the same place, though no account is given of the work then performed. In May a third convention was held, at the same place again, which consisted of the three theologians already mentioned, besides Musculus, Chytræus, and Cornerus. At this last convention the work performed at the former meetings was reviewed, few more alterations were made, and then the finished work was approved. And at this last convention the Bergish Book, as it was called, or the Formula of Concord as now found in the Book of Concord, was finished, on the 28th day of May, 1577.

The question now arose, how can the adoption of the Formula be secured by the greatest number? At the first convention at Bergen it was decided that it would be best to convene a general Synod of all those who adopted the Augsburg Confession; but this plan was now abandoned, because it was evident that the Formula would be strongly opposed by some, and it was feared that discussion would only serve to increase and strengthen the opposition.† The last convention at Bergen advised the elector of Saxony

* Heppe, III., 207. Herzog, Concordienformel, p. 95.

† The elector of Brandenburg also opposed the convening of a general Synod to consider the Formula. He was in favor of first securing the adoption of the Formula and then calling a general Synod. A free and full public discussion of the Formula would endanger the whole work of concord. From the experience of the past it was evident that no formula could be made which would satisfy all. To this last Formula the voice of opposition must be hushed as far as possible. Heppe, III., 215. The matter was a delicate one, and shrewdness and sagacity were necessary to carry it on successfully. The serpent's cunning was therefore used to secure the adoption of the Formula.

first of all to send the Formula to those of whose approval there was no doubt, after which those whose signatures were doubtful might be requested to sign it, who might be influenced by the signatures already obtained. The objections of those who refused to sign it were to be answered, after which they were again to be requested to sign it; if they still refused no more attention was to be paid them. They expected the most opposition to the Formula from those who wanted a more explicit recognition of Melanchthon's writings. To such persons the reasons were to be given "why no other writings of Melanchthon were inserted than the Augsburg Confession and its Apology."* And this last convention at Bergen also advised, that the different princes should use their influence and authority to secure the adoption of the Formula of Concord, and to prevent in their respective countries the teaching of doctrines in conflict with it. The action of the convention indicated that they regarded the Formula of Concord finished, and that they wanted no opinions respecting it from others, but only their signatures. At all hazards its adoption must be secured. The very title given to the work indicated that it was regarded as the ultimatum. The Torgau Book was merely called: "Opinion, showing by what means, through God's Word, the dissensions between the theologians of the Augsburg Confession may be settled and removed in a Christian manner;" but this last Formula was called "A general, pure, correct, and final Repetition and Explanation of some articles of the Augsburg Confession, on which there has, for some time, been controversy among some theologians, which is herein removed and settled according to the Word of God and the summary of our Christian Faith." This very title shows the presumption of the men who composed the convention. What right had they to call their production "general" or "universal," since it was very probable that many Luther-

* *Cur non potuerimus nec adhuc possumus ulla alia Scripta Philippi Melanchthonis in hoc Corpus Doctrinæ inserere, quam August. Confessionem ejusque Apologiam.*" Planck, III., 550—note. Heppe, III., 211.

ans would reject it?*. They were but few in number, and yet they claimed, before the approval of the Church at large was secured, that their work was final; and the intimation in the very title was clear, that all attempts of others still to improve the Formula would be regarded as impious. And what right had those six theologians to decide *universally and finally* what must be regarded as a "pure and correct repetition and explanation of the Augsburg Confession?" What authority had they to determine, for all men and for all ages, how men must interpret the Great Confession? The principle on which they acted is plain enough: Christians are not to have the liberty of interpreting the Bible for themselves, this must be done by the creed of the church; but they are not even to have liberty to interpret the creed themselves, that must be done for them authoritatively by a few men (the authors of the Formula) from whose decision there is no appeal. No wonder that those men opposed the convening of a general Synod, for such a synod might have criticised too severely their work and might have questioned their authority. And then, these men wanted the adoption of the Formula, not discussion and criticism.

Another fact makes it seem strange that such a title* should be given to their work. They and the whole Church knew that the Formula was not brought into its present form because that was believed by its authors to be the pure and only true interpretation of the Augsburg Confession. All knew that their aim was to prepare a statement of doctrine which should please the greatest number. Hence the members of the convention had to sacrifice their own preferences and convictions, and, for the sake of accomplishing their purposes, adopt those of others. Why were so many changes made in the different formulas of Concord prepared from 1568 till 1579? Because it was found that no formula prepared could gain the approbation of those whose approbation was sought and needed. Hence the for-

* The word "general" was afterwards dropped, when it was found that all Lutherans would not adopt the Formula, and for it the word "thorough" (*gründlich*) was substituted.

mulas were constantly changed, so as to make them as acceptable as possible to the greatest number, and so as to give offence to as few as possible. After criticisms on the various formulas were received, alterations were made in this article to suit one party, in that to suit another. And, as it was impossible to suit all parties in every respect, the reason often given for not making all the changes asked by a party, was, that if the change asked for was made, some other party would be offended at it. And not only did the six theologians of the convention have to shape their phrases so as to please parties not represented, but they had to yield to each other for the sake of keeping peace among themselves. Andrea and Chemnitz, the two principal men of the convention, not only differed in their views, but they became bitterly incensed at each other.* And this production of expediency and policy, which probably expressed the honest convictions of no one in all respects, but which was assented to as a compromise, this production was styled, "*A general, pure, correct, and final Repetition and Explanation of the Augsburg Confession!*"

The electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, who had taken so active an interest in the preparation of the Formula, were also most active in securing its approval. They sent copies to various other princes, with the request that they should use their influence to have it adopted and signed by their theologians. The elector of Saxony appointed Andrea, Chemnitz, and Polycarp Leyser, superintendent at Wittenberg, to travel through the electorate to get the signatures of the theologians and school teachers. These were assembled at various places, the Formula was read to them (for it was not yet printed, so that all could examine it at leisure), and then they were urged to sign it. The committee answered questions, removed objections, and presented the claims of the Formula in the strongest light. Without special difficulty, and with few exceptions, the adoption of

* This is probably the reason why Chemnitz afterwards so frequently expressed his regrets that he was ever requested to take part in the work of preparing the Formula of Concord. Planck, III., 546. Note.

the Formula was secured in the entire electorate,* without applying external force.

In a similar manner the Formula was introduced into the electorate of Brandenburg, but not with as much success. Among others, the preachers of Neu-Mark refused to sign it, giving, as some of their reasons, that the doctrine of the person of the Son of God was stated so confusedly and unintelligibly, that they did not understand it; they wanted a general Synod, not a few persons, to decide the question of the adoption of a formula of concord; the explanations of the Confession in the Formula did not embrace all articles of the Confession; Luther himself, the year before his death, declared that, since the days of the Apostles, no book had been written which was better than Melanchthon's *Loci*, for which reason, in order that Luther's opinion might not be treated lightly, the *Loci* ought to be added to the Formula; that, instead of the article of Christ's descent into hell, one on his ascent to Heaven ought to be placed, since the former is interpreted with vain imaginations by many; in the Formula a difference should be made in Luther's writings, since preachers and teachers actually go so far as to prove articles of doctrine from Luther's *Table-Talk*, causing great injury to the whole church, and derision on the part of the Jesuits; then the very men, the six theologians, who prepared the Formula of Concord, not long ago, praised in the highest terms Melanchthon's *Loci*, and his entire system of doctrines; Selnecker (one of the six) himself op-

* We do not know the influences used in every instance to secure the signatures. But we do know that the new Formula needed many explanations before it became palatable to those who had heretofore held Melanchthon in high esteem, and had adopted his *Corpus doctrinæ*. At Torgau the committee were asked, "why Melanchthon was nowhere mentioned in the Book as teacher of the church, since he had composed the Augsburg Confession and Apology." In Freiburg they were asked, what authority was henceforth to be attached to the altered Confession of 1540? At Dresden an explanation was required why Luther and Melanchthon were severed, who had been united by God? To answer these and similar questions required all the ingenuity of Andrea. The doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body and the *communicatio idiomatum*, on which it is based, also, required many explanations. Heppe, III., 218, 241.

posed the use of the words "*realis communicatio idiomatum*," which were used in the Formula.*

In Wurtemberg, Brunswick, Anspach, Luneburg, Mecklenburg, Oldenburg, Hamburg, Lubeck, Henneburg, Baden and other places the Formula was adopted. The elector of the Palatinate refused to adopt the Formula. He objected to it because it did not recognize the altered Confession, which had been used at the colloquies at Worms and Ratisbon by common consent of the Evangelical party; which in 1561 had been approved by the princes at Naumburg, and had been presented to emperor Ferdinand at Frankfurt, in 1562. He objected to the doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body, and opposed the use of the word "condemn" (*damnamus*) in the Formula as applied to the Calvinists and Zwinglians. The elector was too influential a prince for the friends of the Formula to think lightly of his refusal to adopt it. In order to induce him to accept it they promised to prepare a preface to the Formula, in which the points to which he objected should be satisfactorily explained.† This satisfied the elector and secured the adoption of the Formula in the Palatinate. The Formula was also adopted in Prussia, except the professors of the university of Königsberg who refused to sign it.

But in spite of the great efforts of the theologians who had prepared the Formula of Concord, and of the princes who favored its adoption, the unanimous consent of the Lutherans could not be secured, whilst the signatures of those who were not regarded as genuine Lutherans were not expected. In Anhalt, Hesse, Pommerania, Holstein, Zweibrücken, Bremen, Nuremberg, Strasburg, Spire, Worms, Frankfurt on the Main, Magdeburg, and Nordhausen, the Formula was rejected. And outside of Germany the Formula was also rejected in Denmark,‡ Danzig, and Elbing.

* Their reasons for rejecting the Formula of Concord are given entire by Heppe, III., 243-245.

† Planck, III., 637. Heppe, III., 92.

‡ To the landgrave of Hesse the king of Denmark wrote the 8th of February 1581, that he "had received the two printed copies, so excellently and beautifully bound, which had been sent him, a short time ago, by his dear sister, wife of the elector of Saxony, and had thrown them into the fire as soon as he saw them." Herzog, Art. Concordienformel., p. 96.

The principal objections made to the Formula were, that Melancthon was entirely ignored, that the condemnation of alleged errorists was too severe, and that doctrines were taught which were not only new but also in conflict with those that had been generally received. The landgrave of Hesse objected to the doctrine that the divine attributes of Christ were communicated to his human nature,* and that consequently his body was everywhere present as well as his divine nature, which he regarded as a new and dangerous doctrine.† The theologians of Holstein declared, that they were in duty bound to object, in their own name as well as in the name of their churches, "that Dr. J. Andrea and his five consorts had arrogated to themselves this authority over all the churches which had adopted the Augsburg Confession, that they had everywhere, without the authority of a general synod, presented for subscription their book as a general confession and as an unanimous interpretation of the Augsburg Confession, so that all who refused to accept and sign it were to be suspected of secret fanaticism. Since by means of a careful collation of this book (the Formula of Concord) with the Augsburg Confession, its Apology, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Catechisms, and the Loci of Master Philip, we have found that the explanation of the true doctrine is presented in these books and writings much better, plainer, more methodically, more intelligibly, and more thoroughly than is done in this Formula of Concord and Book, in which (since we are necessitated by our consciences to speak of it without having respect to persons) some articles are so confusedly thrown and mixed together; therefore we cannot possibly accept and approve it as a clear, correct, and plain interpretation of the Augsburg Confession, by means of which the unity of the true doctrine can be maintained against all kinds of errors."‡ The theologians of Pommerania objected to the "affected mention of the first Augsburg Confession in the Formula," and at a synod held at Greifswald declared, that

* "Quod proprietates divinæ naturæ per unionem personalem effundantur in humanam naturam."

† Planck, III., 569, 571.

‡ Planck, III., 576.

they could not adopt the Formula "without burdening their consciences with the most grievous sin against the eighth commandment, since they were most powerfully convinced of the injustice done to Melanchthon in the Formula."*

But not only among Lutherans did the Formula of Concord meet with decided opposition. Other Protestants thought its adoption would be followed by disastrous consequences. Elizabeth of England wanted a more intimate union among all members of the Evangelical Church, so as to oppose more successfully the aggressive movements of the Papists. Philip Sidney was sent to Germany to communicate her desires to palsgrave John Casimir, to the elector of the Palatinate, and to the landgrave of Hesse. Other persons were sent to Germany by the queen on the same mission. The queen through them complained, that an effort was made to introduce a new formula of faith into Germany, under the pretext of defending the Augsburg Confession,† by means of which formula all those churches were to be excluded from fellowship which had heretofore agreed with the German Church in all essentials of faith. And this division in the Church was being made at the very time when their common enemy, the Papists, was threatening them with fresh attacks in various quarters. This movement to introduce the Formula and thus divide the Church, she thought, could only have been instigated by the Jesuits, whose cause could be promoted better by no other means. The German princes were accordingly entreated to consider the impropriety of condemning unheard the Evangelical churches in England, Scotland, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Poland, and Hungary, and the queen herself. The adoption of a new confession of faith would imply that the confession heretofore held was insufficient and defective, and would be in conflict with the former position occupied by the Evangelical states. Not the welfare of a particular church should be sought, but of all Protestantism. To bring about an offensive and defensive union

* Planck, III. 580. The Anhalt and Nuremburg theologians also rejected the Formula, because it was so unjust to Melanchthon. The latter also thought it contained new and suspicious doctrines. Planck, III., 585-589.

† "Sub prætextu defensionis confessionis Augustanæ."

of the whole Church, the queen proposed that all controversy be laid aside, till a general synod could be convened to settle the points in dispute, and that money be raised to support an army in case of war with their adversaries.*

With the princes favorable to the Formula the English ambassadors could accomplish but little. The former tried to show the latter that the queen had misunderstood the aim and nature of the Formula. The fact that the intended Formula of Concord would be the cause of a real division in the Evangelical Church, may have alarmed the friends of the work; but it did not lead them to abandon it.

On the continent, too, the Formula met with decided opposition from those who were opposed to exclusive Lutheranism. Chiefly through the influence of palsgrave John Casimir a convention of those opposed to this exclusive tendency was held at Frankfurt on the Main, in the autumn of 1577, to consider the interests of the Evangelical Church. Besides the representatives of the palsgrave, there were present delegates from France, England, Poland, Hungary, and the Netherlands, and also representatives from the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé.† The convention decided to address the princes promoting the adoption of the Formula, and urge them to abandon the same. The address prepared was similar in tone to that of the queen of England. It declared that the non-German Evangelical churches were falsely charged with a rejection of the Augsburg Confession, since they differed from their opponents only in the interpretation of the Augustana, they accepting the same in the sense of the editions of 1540 and 1542, which had been improved by Luther and Melancthon.‡ The German princes were, therefore, besought not to condemn the non-German churches, but to aim at the more perfect union of all the members of the Evangelical Church.

* Planck, 591-595. Heppe, IV., 5-10.

† The churches of Bohemia and Switzerland had been invited, but were not represented. They, however, sent letters explaining the reasons why they could not be represented; but they expressed their willingness to approve everything that would tend to promote unity in the Church.

‡ Heppe, IV., 20.

The elector of Saxony, who was one of the principal promoters of the Formula of Concord, was perplexed by the action of this convention and the efforts of the English ambassadors. Andrea was requested to prepare an opinion on the subject for the elector. In the document prepared by him he tried to remove the various objections to the Formula, and make the mission of the English ambassadors and the aim of the Frankfurt convention fruitless.* But Andrea's reasoning did not satisfy the elector. The many objections to the Formula made him suspicious that after all it might not be as perfect as he had imagined. Similar impressions were made by these objections on the elector of Brandenburg. These two electors therefore agreed, again to call a meeting of the authors of the Formula, and add to them several secular counsellors, for the purpose of weighing the objections and considering the propriety of once more altering the Formula. The objections which the elector of Saxony wanted the theologians especially to consider and to remove, if possible, were: the repeated and affected mention of the unaltered Augsburg Confession, since it was undeniable that at Naumburg in 1561, that Confession was approved which was enlarged by Melancthon during Luther's life, consequently they would appear to condemn themselves, if now they only wanted the unaltered Confession adopted; the phrase that represents man in conversion as a mere stick or block of wood as far as his will is concerned; the phrases used in the article on the Lord's Supper respecting the ubiquity of Christ's body; and the strong term (*damnamus*) used in condemning the Calvinists.†

The theologians and four counsellors met at Tagermunde in March, 1577. The convention lasted five days. The theologians made a statement of their views of the objections, but were unwilling to alter the Formula.

New efforts were now made to induce those Lutherans, who had rejected the Formula, to accept it, and a removal of their objections was attempted. But the opposition was generally too deep and too well founded to be removed by any explanations that could be given. In 1579, some theo-

* Planck, III., 604-611. Heppe, IV., 30-38.

† Planck, III., 613-617. Heppe, IV., 39-44.

logians of Hesse and Anhalt met in Cassel, by whom it was declared that in most articles of the Formula "quite a new, dangerous, false and impious doctrine was contained;" and the "unusual and unprecedented process, by means of which the Formula was to be forced on every one," was protested against. By the three electors, who had adopted the Formula, ambassadors were sent to the landgrave of Hesse, accompanied by Andrea and Chemnitz, to induce him to sign the new preface, which had been made to the Formula to satisfy, if possible, some who had opposed the Formula before; and to request him again, to adopt the Formula itself. But the landgrave replied to the request of the ambassadors, "that he would rather thrust his hand into the fire than sign the Book with it, if all its present contents were to remain in it." He further stated that "he would never let their Book lead him to abandon the true faith. He had now lived the longest period of his life, the grey hairs were making their appearance, therefore he could not now learn a new faith, but must abide by the Augsburg Confession. In his opinion the electors, their lords, would also do better if they did the same, and did not permit themselves to be led astray by two or three conceited priests."*

But to the decided rejection of the Formula and its explanatory and conciliatory preface, by so many, was added a new mortification for the men who left no means untried to secure their adoption. Julius, duke of Brunswick, was the first prince who moved in the work of preparing a Formula of Concord; he was in fact the instigator of the whole matter and one of the most zealous advocates of the Book. Whatever other princes might do, his adherence to the new creed was questioned by none. In 1578, he had his son Henry Julius consecrated Roman Catholic bishop of Halberstadt, and took the first steps to have two other sons

* "Allzuweise Pfaffen." Planck, III., 653-654. He also added: "Prove from the Bible, if you can, that Christ's body is not in heaven, and that his humanity is everywhere. These are altogether new dogmas, etc.," 654, note. Many more unfavorable criticisms of Lutheran princes and theologians on the Formula of Concord might be quoted; but the above are sufficient to show in what light many of them regarded this product of an exclusive and illiberal party, which disgraced the name of Luther.

prepared for orders in the Romish church. By this means he expected to secure temporal advantages to his family. That he was doing anything inconsistent with his faithful adherence to the Formula, seems not to have entered his mind. While the Papists gloried in the conduct of the duke, others saw in it an evidence that the Formula was calculated to lead back to the Papacy.* The advocates of the Formula keenly felt the disgrace cast on them and their cause by the duke, and Chemnitz sent him a severe reproof. But the men who were determined to make the Bergisch Book a new creed for Lutherans, began to fear that their opposition to the duke's course might lead him to withdraw from the Formula, a calamity which they tried to avoid by sending him the new Preface in 1579, with the request to sign it. But it did not please him. In 1580, Andrea was sent to him to use his explanatory and persuasive arts to make the duke friendly again to the cause he had once so warmly espoused; but in vain. His hearty coöperation could not again be secured, and finally (though not till after its publication) he abandoned the Formula entirely.†

During these years of earnest efforts to secure the adoption of the Bergisch Book as a peace-basis of Lutheranism,

* Heppe, IV., 204.

† The duke found fault with the new Preface because it recognized the Frankfurt recess, which was not favorable to exclusive Lutheranism, as "Christian." Chemnitz, one of the principal authors of the Formula, was greatly dissatisfied with the Preface for the same reason. Instead of assisting in securing the adoption of the Preface, he used his influence against it. And some of the strictest of the exclusivists insisted on having the epithet "Christian" in that connection stricken out. The Luneberger orthodoxy went still farther; besides demanding this alteration in the Preface, they feared that the signing of the Formula might not be sufficient to insure orthodoxy, and therefore demanded that all whose doctrinal position was suspected must condemn their former errors if they wanted to sign the Formula. (Heppe, IV., 212). But Chemnitz was not only dissatisfied with Andrea on account of his expedient Preface; he was also incensed at him for the manner in which he tried to bring back the duke of Brunswick to the Formula of Concord. And the misunderstanding already existing for some time between these two principal authors of the Formula, was thus increased. To them, as well as to the church at large, the intended Formula Concordiæ became a Formula discordiæ.

the Book itself was not punished. The copies used in securing subscriptions were all in writing. It was not to be printed until its adoption had been secured. The effort to secure the subscriptions of all Lutherans was a decided failure, hence the object for which it was prepared could not be attained. In spite of their failure, the men who had devoted years of labor to the work, and had manifested such extraordinary cunning, and expediency, and pliability, could not think of entirely abandoning their offspring. Yet the growing opposition to the abortive effort to secure the universal adoption of the Formula in some manner or by some means, the withdrawal of former friends from the cause, and the lukewarmness of others filled the firm adherents with apprehensions. All would perhaps be lost unless the Formula was soon published with its signatures, and introduced where it had friends.* But the new Preface, prepared to remove the scruples of the elector of the Palatinate, had met with such opposition from many who had signed the Formula, though it secured the signature of the elector, that the publication could not take place till some expedient had been found to retain the elector's signature, and at the same time satisfy those signers of the Formula who objected to the Preface. The principal objection to the Preface was, that the Frankfurt recess (which had been adopted by the princes assembled at Frankfurt in 1558) was called Christian.† Contrary to expectation, however, the elector was easily persuaded to drop the word "Christian," and thus the preface became acceptable to those who objected to that epithet.

In February, 1580, Andrea and Chemnitz once more met at Bergen to make the necessary alterations in the Preface. This meeting served to increase the quarrel of the peace.

* Some were afraid that the whole labor on the Formula would be lost, and that all the subscriptions would prove useless. From all quarters, therefore, letters came to Chemnitz, urging him to use his influence to have the Formula published and introduced into the countries where it had been signed. Planck, III., 672, note.

† This recess was prepared with a view of settling the controversies then raging in the church. The doctrinal part of the recess was prepared by Melancthon, and met with bitter opposition from his enemies. Planck, III., 174-192. Heppe, I., 269-277.

makers. They differed as to the alterations that should be made. Andrea, however, gained his ends; Chemnitz was disaffected, but nevertheless signed the Preface with the alterations suggested by Andrea.*

Early in 1580, the Book of Concord was published, by command of the elector of Saxony, and at the Easter-fair it was offered for sale in Leipzig. But, as mistakes were discovered in the edition, the copies already sold were again recalled.† The mistakes being corrected, the 25th of June, the fiftieth anniversary of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession, was then fixed upon as the day for the issue of the Book. The original title was changed to read: "Concordia, Christiana, repeated, unanimous Confession of the following named Electors, Princes, and States of the Augsburg Confession, and the doctrine and faith of their theologians, whose names are attached to it.‡ Added is an explanation, well founded on God's Word as the only rule, of several articles on which there has been controversy and dispute since Dr. Martin Luther's death. Published with the unanimous consent and command of the mentioned electors, princes and states, for the instruction and warning of their lands, churches, schools, and descendants. Dresden, 1580."

The publication of the Book of Concord was the occasion of a new quarrel among the professed adherents of the same. The Small Catechism of Luther had attached to it two formulas, one for Marriage and the other for Baptism. In some of the first editions of the Book of Concord these formulas were also published, while they were omitted in

* But in April, the same year, Chemnitz circulated a bitter letter against Andrea. This quarrel for the sake of peace soon became quite public, and greatly displeased the friends of the Formula, especially the elector of Saxony. Chytræus, though one of them, seems to have been heartily disgusted with the fathers of the Formula of Concord, and uses the following language: "Multi Collegas Bergenses octo latronum Sodalititio Aristotelico conferunt, in quo dissidentes primum quatuor a quatuor, deinde duo a duobus, tandem unus ab altero sublatus est." Planck, III., 678, note.

† Heppe, IV., 221, 222.

‡ These signatures were 8,000 in number.

others.* This difference in the very Book which was intended to lay aside all doctrinal differences was the occasion of much dissatisfaction. Some wanted the formulas retained in the Book, others insisted that they did not belong there. The elector of the Palatinate declared that he would rather abandon the entire work than accept the formula for Baptism with its exorcism,† while the elector of Brandenburg declared that these formulas were essential parts of the Catechism, and therefore belonged to the Book of Concord. The elector of Saxony appointed a committee of theologians to give their views on the subject. They reported that the formulas, being mere rituals, not confessions, should be omitted. The elector of Brandenburg also appointed a committee of theologians, who reported in favor of retaining the formulas. The elector himself declared that he would not have secured the signatures of his theologians, if he had known the manner in which the Book was to be treated. The three electors were, at the suggestion of the elector of the Palatinate, to deposit in their archives a copy of the Book of Concord, so that posterity might see their unity in the faith. After much dispute and effort it was finally agreed that the elector of the Palatinate might deposit one without the formulas, while the other two retained them in their copies. The elector of Saxony, in the meanwhile, had the book published with the formulas, and without them, to

* The formulas were found in the copies published at Magdeburg, and also in the first copies printed at Dresden. In the other copies printed at Dresden and in the edition published in Tübingen, they were not found.

† The parts of this formula, which was used in Saxony, which refer to Exorcism, are as follows: "Let the baptizer say: 'Depart, thou impure spirit! and give place to the Holy Spirit.' (Exi, spiritus immunde! et locum præbe Spiritui Sancto.) Let him then make the sign of the cross on the forehead and breast of the child, and say: 'Receive the sign of the holy cross both on the forehead and on thy breast.'" After prayer the minister says: "I adjure thee, thou impure spirit, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that thou come out of, and depart from this servant of Jesus Christ. Amen." (Adjuro te, impure spiritus, in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, ut ex eas et discedas ab hoc servo Jesu Christi N. Amen).

suit the taste of the purchaser.* These formulas cannot properly be regarded as a part of the Book of Concord, since they refer to ceremonies and not to articles of faith.

It is not necessary to pursue any farther the history of the Formula of Concord, as that is foreign to the design of this work. The distractions it produced in the Church, the discords it created, the opposition it met with, the works published against it, the actual differences between those who professed to have attained perfect unity, the disgraceful method of introducing the Book of Concord in some universities after its publication,† the means used to make preachers and teachers conform to the doctrines of the Book, together with the whole history of its preparation and introduction, prove that the work itself was a failure. The entire mode of procedure was wrong, for it was based on the idea that peace could be restored by external doctrinal unity, by subscribing the same creed, when there was no internal, spiritual unity. The aim was to establish a mechanical union, not organic unity. Hence, the whole

* Planck, III., 688-689. Heppe, IV. 235-242. The theologians of Helmstedt also found fault with the Book of Concord, because it contained a copy of the Formula of Concord which differed in some respects from the one they had signed.

† One cannot read without sadness and indignation, of the unworthy methods used to induce the professors of the universities of Wittenberg, Leipzig, Jena, and Heidelberg to sign the Formula of Concord in 1580 and 1581. It was very important to have these universities sound on the new doctrines, and hence special efforts were made to secure the names of the professors. Committees were sent to them for that purpose. Sometimes these committees used their learning and expedients for days, and then did not always succeed. The theologians of Heidelberg appealed to the Augsburg Confession, but declared, "that they could not bind themselves by oath to words and dogmas which emanated from Luther and other men." Some of the professors of the above named universities were induced to sign the Formula without difficulty; others signed it conditionally; some resigned their position, and others were dismissed. Aged, pious and learned men were driven from their posts of usefulness, because they could not crush their consciences sufficiently to submit to the new yoke. Some ministers were similarly dealt with. Thus the men who called their work "Concordia" cursed the Church and heaped reproach on the Lutheran name. An account of the introduction of the Formula into the universities named is found in Heppe, IV., 242-255.

Formula was a kind of manufacture (Machwerk) which required skill, sagacity, and pliable policy; it was patch-work, not a growth. It was not really the work of the Church, but of a few men, who deprecated the idea of having a general synod, in which the entire Church was represented, undertake the work. As a natural consequence, the adoption of the work was neither universal nor spontaneous. Secular authority, numerous and ingenious explanations suited to different parties, and powerful persuasives were necessary to make the thing palatable. The utmost shrewdness was necessary in securing the subscriptions; first those were to be secured who were most favorable to the work and most influential, as their example was valuable; the Formula was not to be published till after the signatures were secured; it was indeed to be read to the theologians, but no one imagines that those requested to sign the Formula understood it fully by merely hearing it read, or that they were able at once to say whether or not its contents were a repetition and explanation of the Augsburg Confession. But the failure of the work was acknowledged by its warmest advocates, since they found it necessary to change its very title, so as to make it merely a confession of those who signed it, not the Confession of the Lutheran Church.

The Formula of Concord maintains, in the beginning of the Epitome, the true Protestant principle respecting the authority of creeds made by men, when it declares the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the only rule of faith. No other writings are to be regarded as equal to the Scriptures, but they can only be regarded as witnesses or testimonies of the manner in which the teachings of the Scripture have been interpreted since the days of the Apostles.* Thus according to the Formula of Con-

* The rule of faith is laid down in the beginning of the Formula. It says: "The sacred Scripture alone remains the sole authority, rule, and standard, according to which, as the only touchstone, all doctrines shall and must be understood and judged whether they be good or bad, right or wrong. But the other symbols and writings mentioned above are not authorities like the sacred Scripture, but only a testimony and explanation of the faith, showing how at any time the sacred Scriptures were understood and explained, by those then

cord, the value of a confession of faith is historical, showing what the authors and adherents of the confession believed; it is simply their interpretation of the Scriptures. It cannot be a rule of faith, nor is it a binding authority. These are prerogatives that belong to no writing except the sacred Scriptures. The Formula itself is, consequently, according to its own principle, not a rule of faith, nor a law for future generations, but merely the opinion of its authors and signers, on the various controversies that, at the time of its origin, agitated the church. If they tried to force their opinions on others, and pronounced a sentence of condemnation on those who differed from them, they only proved that their practice did not agree with their principles.

Of the various testimonies of faith made by men in past ages, the following are adopted in the Formula of Concord: the three general creeds of the church, the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian; in respect to the controversies then agitating the church, the first, unaltered Augsburg Confession, its Apology, and the Smalcald Articles; and for the special benefit of the laity, as a kind of bible for them, the small and the large Catechisms of Luther. These, together with the Formula of Concord, constitute the Book of Concord, and the creed of those who adopted the Formula of Concord. It is not claimed that these writings are the condition of true Lutheranism in the future.* And if the

living, respecting the controverted articles in God's church, and showing, too, how doctrines contrary to the sacred Scriptures were rejected and condemned."

* This was, however, done practically by the adherents of the Formula. But they were careful, in laying down the principles of the rule of faith, to avoid the very appearance of arrogating to themselves the authority of deciding what must, at all times, and by all men, be regarded as the only true interpretation of Scripture. Had such an authority been claimed, it would have proved fatal to their aim, and would have made their work a still greater failure. They do not even claim to have the right to determine what must be believed by Lutherans. When they, therefore, reject and condemn certain doctrines, they do not pretend to do so because the doctrines condemned are contrary to the Lutheran faith, for they have no authority to determine authoritatively what this is; but they condemn them merely because they are opposed to their own declaration of faith, and their view of Lutheranism. After mentioning the creeds adopted by the Formula, it is therefore stated: "According to the

question is asked, what does the Formula of Concord profess to be? the correct answer is, it merely professes to be the opinion of its signers respecting the controversies of that age. And to the question, how does it regard the various other symbols it mentions? the answer must be given, it regards them as the views of certain men in former ages who drew up and adopted those symbols; and as the Formula adopts them as correct expressions of faith, they are necessarily adopted by all who adopt the Formula.

In the beginning of the second part of the Formula, it is stated that the writings adopted in the Formula as creeds had always been held by all the churches adhering to the Augsburg Confession. And it is also stated that these writings have ever been held by the churches represented by the signers, as their faith. Now, this is simply in direct conflict with the facts of history. It is not true that, even before controversy arose, the unaltered Augsburg Confession was universally held by all the Lutheran or Evangelical churches; for it had almost entirely disappeared before that time, and the altered Confession was the prevalent one. And the assertion is equally erroneous, that the Smalcald Articles had been unanimously held as a symbolical book, and the same is true of the large Catechism.* The small Catechism was in general use, though not as a symbolical book, but as a manual of instruction. And the erroneous statement seems the more strange, when it is remembered that the very authors of the Formula, and the churches of the electorate of Saxony, which were the first to adopt it, had formerly held the altered Confession. And in the various reviews of the Formula, this effort to falsify history is fre-

rule mentioned above, all doctrines shall be arranged, and what is contrary to it must be rejected and condemned as contrary to the unanimous declaration of *our* faith." But while these men in principle made all confessions mere testimonies of the views of certain men, they too often made their own confessions binding in practice.

* Planck, III., 698, says: "It was a false assertion, that heretofore, in all Lutheran churches and schools, the unaltered Augsburg Confession had been adopted, and that it only had been held. The Smalcald Articles, and one of Luther's Catechisms, had never been generally received and recognized as symbolical books."

quently referred to. But one instance need be referred to, in order to prove how utterly false the statement is; that instance is the action of the assembly of princes at Naumburg, in 1561. The doctrinal basis adopted in the Formula was, indeed, the one which exclusive Lutherans had generally advocated; but its adoption had never been universal. But it was necessary to falsify history, in order that the claim of the adherents of the Formula might have some show of plausibility, namely, the claim that in their Formula they only taught what had always been held in the church, so as to make it seem that they were in real unity and identity with the Lutheran church of the past.

Most important for the history of the Augsburg Confession is the position given the Confession in the Formula of Concord. The unaltered is adopted as the principal Confession of the Evangelical or Reformed church.* The altered Confession is entirely ignored. The editions of 1540 and 1542 were the prevalent ones used in the church since their publication. Under Luther's own eyes and with his consent these editions were allowed to supersede the first edition; and till Melancthon's death they were almost universally used, so much so that the unaltered Confession was unknown even to scholars. The Formula, therefore, in adopting the unaltered, to the exclusion of the altered Confession, breaks with the history of the church in the past. Placing itself entirely on the side of the Flacian faction in this respect, it occupies a position at variance with the greater part of the church from 1540 till the adoption of the Formula. But the editors of the Book of Concord were not only determined to adopt the unaltered Confession, but they were determined to adopt a copy purer and better than had ever been published during the Reformation. In their extreme desire to get the real original, they would not adopt the first German edition published by Melancthon and generally regarded as the unaltered; but they secured a copy of a German copy of the Confession, found in the archives at Mentz, and published it as the true original. Perhaps no reformer had ever seen that copy; certainly it

* Both these terms are used in the beginning of the Declaration. The term "Lutheran church" is not used.

had never been adopted in any church; it was nevertheless made the standard of faith. It was afterwards found to be no original, but a very imperfect copy of some other copy, which was probably taken before the Confession was finished; and it was found to be full of mistakes. Even its signatures are not reliable.

From 1540, till the rise of the Flacian party the altered Confession was regarded in the Evangelical church as the interpretation of the original Confession; hence it was not called "altered," but "enlarged" or "improved." But the Flacian party, in their hatred of Melancthon, were unwilling to accept his alterations as a correct interpretation of the original. In this respect the Formula again agrees with that faction. The Augsburg Confession is regarded as an insufficient declaration of faith. As it may be variously interpreted by different parties, some safeguard must be thrown around it to prevent the difference thus produced. Some interpretation of the original Confession must be found. The Formula rejects the author's interpretation of the original, but regards the Apology and the Smalcald Articles,* as a correct interpretation. In this respect the Formula again differs from the church in the past; it rejects the interpretation generally received by that church, and gives the Smalcald Articles the position formerly occupied by the altered editions of the Confession. But for fear the laity might still err, even if they possessed the original Augsburg Confession, the Apology, and the Smalcald Articles, therefore the Catechisms of Luther, which were never intended as symbolic books, but as manuals of general religious instruction, are also adopted. But this mass of symbolical books is not yet regarded as sufficient to insure perfect sameness of faith; therefore the Formula of Concord is prepared, to explain certain points of controversy. This is not, indeed, represented as a new creed, but it is declared to be an authentic interpretation of various articles of the Augsburg Confession. In adopting the Formula of Concord something was therefore adopted of which the reformers, the whole church of the Reformation, and the post-

* The Smalcald Articles were published by Luther as his testimony and Confession, not as a Confession of the church. See his Preface to the Articles.

reformation church till 1580 knew nothing, and which the great majority would in all probability have rejected. Fifty years after the Augsburg Confession was written, an explanation was prepared which its authors and advocates attempted to legitimate as the only authentic explanation of the articles in dispute! That this explanation was not the unanimous one of the church, is evident, not only because so many rejected it, but also because if it had been the unanimous view of the church, there would not have been the controversy which it pretended to settle.

The number of confessions which the Formula attempts to thrust on the church, and their bulk, were such as had never before been generally received.* And these various writings, prepared during fifty years and by different men and for different purposes, were all to be regarded as perfectly harmonious with each other and with the Bible! How this fact could be established, or how it could be possible without inspiration, is not explained. Nor is it very clear how those who only heard the Formula read once, and were then asked to sign it, could at once decide that it was in perfect harmony with all the other confessions it adopted.

The idea prevalent in the minds of the framers of the Formula was, that rigid doctrinal sameness was necessary to peace and union. The exercise of charity towards those who differed from them in non-essentials, seems never to have occurred to them. And as it is very common for those who persuade themselves that all must think alike, to believe that all others must think exactly as they do, so the framers of the Formula acted on the principle that all must agree with them to be regarded sound. Their creed, and their repetition and interpretation thereof, must be regarded as the standard of orthodoxy. During the Reformation there was liberty in the mode of receiving and interpreting the Augsburg Confession. This made it possible for those who agreed in essentials, even if they differed in non-essentials, to accept honestly the same confession of faith. At this liberty, which belongs to every Christian, the framers of the Formula of Concord aimed a

* In the German and Latin Book of Concord (Müller's) these writings fill 780 large pages, fine print; in the English (Newmarket) translation, they cover 732 pages.

deadly blow. The Confession, in their opinion, must be understood alike by all; but this was impossible if each was allowed to interpret it for himself. A mass of other writings, which were never prepared with a view of interpreting the Confession, were accordingly made explanations of the Confession. And for fear that the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, and Luther's Catechisms might still allow the least liberty to differ, these framers added their own interpretation in their Formula and had the audacity to call it *universal, clear, complete, and final!* And perhaps no fact connected with the Formula shows more completely the corruptness of the times in which it originated than the fact that men could call themselves Lutherans, who had abandoned the essential principle of the Reformation—freedom of conscience and mind in spiritual things. And only in a corrupt period is it possible to force on the church principles which deprive its members of the right of interpreting for themselves a human creed. And this destruction of true spiritual liberty is one of the characteristics of those who framed and advocated the Formula, and shows how totally different their spirit from that which prevailed in the church of the Reformation,

Whilst the Formula claims to be no new confession of faith, it was in reality made one by its adherents. It, indeed, wants to be a mere repetition and explanation of the Augsburg Confession; but this explanation was regarded by the signers as binding on them, and, therefore, actually took the place of the Augsburg Confession, on the controverted points. The Papists said, you may use the Scriptures and regard them as the supreme authority in matters of faith, but you must understand them exactly as interpreted by the Romish church; and thus the Church and its interpretations were really made more authoritative than the Bible. The Pharisees retained the law, but by means of their traditions or interpretations they made it of non-effect, really elevating their traditions above the law itself. And the same thing which was done by Romanists and Pharisees in reference to the Scriptures and the law, was done by the signers of the Formula of Concord in reference to the Augsburg Confession. They professed to regard the Confession as the great creed of the Evangelical church;

but they pretended that their explanation was the only authentic one. And they wanted to make all who adopted the Confession understand it exactly in the sense of their interpretation. Soon they caught the spirit of the fanatical Flacians,* if they did not already have it, and charged all who did not adopt their Formula, with not being true adherents of the Augsburg Confession. Those who dared differ from them were charged with the heinous crime of being Philippists, Calvinists, Zwinglians, Sacramentarians. Every one was to have the liberty of interpreting the Confession just exactly as the Formula interpreted it; but if his mind failed to run in the groove which the authors of the Formula had made, he subjected himself to the most bitter denunciations, and perhaps to the inconvenience of being driven from his home and country; and he also subjected himself to the danger of not being regarded by the Papists as an adherent to the Augsburg Confession and not included in the peace made in 1555, and therefore liable to persecution from the church of Rome.

The Formula of Concord was intended to make Luther and his writings the supreme authority in the church; hence he himself is repeatedly mentioned, and his writings are referred to as giving the best explanations of the creed of the church.† Melancthon was ignored, and his explanations of the Confession were rejected. The authority of these two great reformers had been united during the Reformation, in spite of their different views on some points. Luther himself could never reject him whom he had always loved, and who had been his most efficient co-laborer.

* The Flacian view that original sin has become the very substance of man, is condemned in the Formula; but nevertheless the Formula may be regarded as in the main the genuine expression of the views of the old Flacian party. Surely many of its signers soon manifested much of the Flacian intolerant and exclusive spirit.

† The authors and signers of the Formula of Concord were not satisfied with the Augsburg Confession, the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, the Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula. This huge mass of creeds, such as had never before been made authoritative, might still be insufficient; therefore Luther's writings were also to be regarded as explanations. And especially was this to be the case on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, on which subject his teachings and polemical writings were to be authoritative.

Luther regarded his writings as superior to his own, and thought Melanchthon's *Loci* unsurpassed by anything written since the days of the Apostles. Until personal hatred of Melanchthon created violent opposition to him, after Luther's death, there was no effort made to separate violently Luther and Melanchthon. The latter was not, indeed, a Luther, but he was loved as the "Preceptor of Germany." With true Protestant liberty, his writings were in all the churches, as well as those of Luther; and it was not found necessary to defame Melanchthon for the sake of exalting Luther. But the Formula, with the many other changes it brought about in the church, also severed violently the two reformers. Melanchthon was suspected of being unsound on the "Adiaphora," the freedom of the will, and the Lord's Supper; for this reason his name and services were not mentioned, and his writings, except the Augsburg Confession and Apology, were utterly ignored. The authors of the Formula knew that they were doing Melanchthon gross injustice, and tried to excuse their proceeding with ingenious explanations and specious arguments. Some of them had praised Melanchthon's altered editions; now they had to censure them and heap reproach on Melanchthon for his alterations! Some of those who signed the Formula had conscientious scruples in aiding the work of destroying the authority of their beloved teacher; but persuasives and subtle reasoning, which were sometimes necessary for days before they could accomplish their object, were used to overcome these scruples. Those who hated Melanchthon were easily satisfied with the Formula in its treatment of Melanchthon; but the most skillful tactics had to be used with his admirers. The haters of Melanchthon rejoiced that he was so shamefully treated; his friends were made to believe that no injustice was intended! The reasoning was adapted to the parties dealt with. When the wind was contrary, tacking was resorted to.* And one of

* One must read a full history of the whole affair to have any just conception of the baseness of the course pursued, in many instances, to secure the adoption of the Formula. If any think that the authors and promoters of the Formula are too severely censured, let them study a more complete history of the Formula. One cannot read that history without being filled with indignation and disgust.

the chief reasons why so many rejected the Formula was, that it was so unjust to Melanchthon's memory and authority, and because they knew that, in severing Melanchthon from Luther, the Formula was departing from the general practice of the church of the Reformation.

But in other respects the Formula of Concord brought about a state of things different from that existing in the church of the Reformation.* During the Reformation the Evangelical Church was virtually united. There were, indeed, differences on minor points of doctrine between the great leaders of the Reformation, as well as between the churches themselves. Nor were the government and practices of the churches alike. Church and state being united, the secular powers had much to do with determining the ceremonies, as well as the government of the churches in their respective countries; and it was not seldom that the secular powers prescribed for the churches of their lands what confessions should be adopted. There being no visible head, it was more difficult to secure a visible unity in the Evangelical Church than in the Romish. Nor was this visible unity regarded essential to real spiritual unity; for it was taught that in the government of the churches, and in the ceremonies of God's house, liberty was to be maintained and differences might be tolerated. But in the Evangelical Church there were also doctrinal differences. The Lord's Supper was the subject of the most extensive, most violent, and most lasting controversy in the church. Luther at times refused the Zwinglians the right of Christian fellowship, and denounced them in the severest terms. And sometimes Melanchthon followed in his footsteps. But

* It is not the aim of this history to discuss the doctrines of the Formula of Concord. But a comparison of the doctrines taught in that Formula, with the confessional writings prevalent during the Reformation, clearly proves that the Formula taught some doctrines different from those generally held in the Evangelical Church in the Reformation period. Take, for instance, the doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body. That doctrine was indeed advocated by some during Melanchthon's life, and was at times maintained by Luther himself. But not till 1559 was it adopted in any confession of faith. At that time, however, it was taught in a confession, the adoption of which was secured in Wurtemberg through the influence of Brentz. Heppe, I., 818.

Luther at other times relented, a better spirit came over him; he then treated the Zwinglians as brethren in Christ, formed a treaty of peace (Formula of Concord, 1536) with them, and addressed them affectionately. And Melancthon was often so lenient towards them that he was actually charged with being a Zwinglian. And though this doctrine caused great dissension in the church, and occasioned much bitter feeling, it did not produce an open rupture. At first the Zwinglians refused to accept the Augsburg Confession on account of the tenth article. But when, in 1540, the Confession was published with this article changed, the Confession was not only accepted throughout Germany, but it was also received in Switzerland and France. The altered Confession thus became the great Confession of the Protestant Church. On that Confession Luther and Calvin, Melancthon and John de Lasky, could stand side by side. But that was a time when human creeds were not yet regarded absolutely binding; when no dogmatic explanation of a few men was forced on the church as a condition of fellowship; and when there was spiritual life enough left in the church to make unity in essentials possible, even if there were liberty and differences on non-essentials. No one confession was made authoritative, though the Augsburg Confession was the one universally in use. Different countries had different confessions;* in the same country various confessions were sometimes used; different confessions were indeed sometimes published in the same book, thus forming together one *Corpus doctrinæ*. No one pretended that all the confessions or writings thus used were exactly the same in every respect; it was taken for granted that the same author might differ in different works; and

* In 1575, August, Elector of Saxony, in writing to his secular counsellors, laments that the land of almost every ruler has a system of doctrines, called *Corpus Doctrinæ*, different from other lands. He therefore advises that each prince who adhered to the Augsburg Confession, should appoint three or four theologians, and as many counsellors, to meet in convention, for the purpose of comparing their various systems of doctrines, making the Augsburg Confession the rule, so as to form from all one system (*Corpus Doctrinæ*) which all the princes could adopt. This new book their theologians were to be ordered to sign. Müller, Introduction, cvi.-cvii.

if different men were the authors of the works used in the churches, the probability was still greater that there were differences. And in interpreting the various confessions in use, Christian liberty was practised. But different confessions, and differences in their interpretations, did not destroy the unity of the church, so long as the Bible was regarded as the only supreme authority, and so long as there was unity in the great fundamental doctrines, which all the reformers and the whole church of the Reformation maintained in opposition to the errors of the Papacy.*

The writings of the reformers were promiscuously used in the different churches and countries. No one was regarded as being authoritative to the exclusion of the rest, but all were used as aids in understanding the sacred Scriptures.

The persecuted Protestants in one country received the sympathy and interposition of those in other countries, even if their confessions differed. The Protestants in Germany, France, Switzerland, England, Poland, Hungary and Bohemia, recognized each other as brethren in Christ, in spite of their differences on minor points of doctrine. Indeed, the subject of convening a general synod of all Protestants in the various countries of Europe was repeatedly agitated.†

But besides these, there were other evidences of unity. One common name was used to designate the Church of the Reformation. To indicate that it was based exclusively

* The different views prevalent in the church of the Reformation were not such as to separate the advocates of those views into different factions which excluded each other, though the unity was not perfect. The German princes repeatedly recognized the Evangelical character of the Waldenses, who did not agree with Luther on the Lord's Supper. 1557 Beza and Farel sent to the princes and theologians assembled at Frankfurt the confession of the Waldenses and their own Calvinistic Confession, and both were pronounced Evangelical. And the Waldenses were actually regarded as adherents of the Augsburg Confession. Heppe, *Confessionelle Entwickle*. Pp. 263, 264.

† For proof that these various indications of unity were real, the entire history of the Reformation must be referred to. A brief sketch of this unity and a number of proofs are given by Heppe, *Conf. Entw.* 261-267. Many other proofs are given in Planck's history; also in Heppe's *Geschichte d. deutschen Protestantismus*, and in Salig.

on the Gospel of Christ, and not on human authority, it was called the Evangelical Church—the Church which went beyond popes, councils, and decrees, to Christ himself for its doctrines. But its unity with the Church of the past was maintained, in spite of its difference from the Church of Rome; hence it was called the Reformed Church—the Church of history reformed, purified of its corruptions. The protest presented at Spire in 1529 gave it the name of the Protestant Church—the Church that protests against Rome's corruptions and human authority binding, in the name of the sacred Scriptures. It was called the Lutheran Church on account of Luther's part in the Reformation; though this name was more frequently used by the Papists, in a contemptuous manner, than by the members of the Church itself. And these various names were used indiscriminately to designate the Church of the Reformation, wherever found, and whatever differences on minor points might prevail. And the members of this Church formed one brotherhood in Christ.

But the unity of the Church was not yet perfect. During that period of fermentation and growth many elements entered into the visible Church which were really foreign to true Christianity, and these elements were of course hostile to true unity. One great need was, a more perfect organization of the Church. The Flacian party, which arose after Luther's death, but never gained much power till after Melancthon's death, aimed at a more perfect organization on the basis of a rigorous doctrinal sameness. Luther's views, as they understood them, were made authoritative. All who agreed with their explanation of Luther's teachings, were admitted to Church-fellowship; all others were excluded. This exclusive, intolerant, and fanatical party determined the character of the Formula of Concord. As they would associate with none but those who agreed with them, no peace could be expected with them, unless their principles were adopted. And they succeeded, too, in infusing their spirit, to a great extent, into the hearts of others who adopted the Formula. And the adoption of the Formula of Concord was really the triumph of a faction in the Church. The different factions, which had heretofore been in the Church, had not succeeded in bringing about

a complete rupture in the Church; but this was now done by the Formula of Concord. Those who adopted it separated themselves from the great Church of the Reformation to form a sect, with all the elements and characteristics of genuine sectarianism. Those who differed from them—Philippists, Calvinists, etc.—were mercilessly condemned, and excluded from all fellowship. Against this procedure the Calvinists, Philippists and others protested; and warning voices, as well as earnest entreaties, came from England, France and other countries, beseeching the framers and advocates of the Formula to abandon their efforts to divide the Evangelical Church. But the leaders in the movement were such as not to be moved by any entreaties, especially by such as came from men whom they condemned as heretics. And even the argument that the Papists would rejoice, and the Jesuits gain new triumphs, by thus dividing the Church, had no effect on these men. And after the division was once effected, it was but natural that the exclusive and hyper-Lutheran tendency should promote the one-sided growth of those most opposed to them, namely of the Calvinistic Church. One extreme begat and promoted the other.

Although the exclusive spirit of the advocates of the Formula led them to claim that they were the only true adherents of the Augsburg Confession and the only genuine followers of Luther, there were many others, who rejected the Formula, who had as much right to the Confession and to Luther as they had. For among those who rejected the Formula there were some whose Lutheran orthodoxy, even in its narrower sense, had never been questioned, until the supercilious claim was made by the authors of the Formula, that they, and they only, had found the true sense of the Confession and of Luther's teachings. Thus by the adoption of the Formula not only was the rupture between the Formula of Concord Lutherans and the Calvinists complete, but there was a complete rupture between those who, in a peculiar sense, regarded themselves as Lutherans. So that now there were those who claimed to follow Luther's authority exclusively, who adopted the Formula, and there were those who made the same claim, but rejected the Formula.

The name Lutheran, originally given by Papists to all

who agreed with Luther in his opposition to Romish errors, also gradually lost its primitive and general signification. At first the name was used to distinguish from the Papists those who agreed with Luther on the great principle of the supreme and only authority of the sacred Scriptures, and on the cardinal doctrine of justification by faith alone. It was therefore synonymous with Evangelical, in so far as it made the Scriptures the only basis of faith; but it was more explicit than Evangelical, in so far as it gave what was regarded by Luther as the cardinal doctrine of the Gospel—justification by faith alone.* But in the course of time the name was taken in a narrower sense, not in its broad, original sense. By some Luther's view of the Lord's Supper, as distinguished from the views of Zwingli and others, was made the test of Lutheranism; and those who held Luther's view on this subject and rejected all others as unorthodox, arrogated the name Lutheran to themselves. The Flacian party went still farther, and claimed that Luther's view on the Lord's Supper is not a sufficient test of orthodoxy; but that on *all* controverted points Luther's authority must be regarded as decisive. And when the Formula of Concord was adopted as the only authentic explanation of Luther's teachings, those who adopted it arrogated the name Lutheran unto themselves, denying the right of all others to use it. Hence, even those who adopted Luther's view of the Sacrament and professed to follow his authority, were not regarded by the adherents of the Formula as Lutheran, unless they understood his teachings exactly as explained in the Formula of Concord, and condemned all who taught differently. Thus the term Lutheran was first applied to all who agreed with Luther in his essential doctrines and in his opposition to Rome; then it was narrowed down so as to apply only to those who, besides this agreement in fundamentals, also agreed with him on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper; then it was narrowed down still more to designate those who, beside this

* If, therefore, a man claimed to draw his doctrines from the Gospel (Evangelium) he might call himself Evangelical; but he could not regard himself as a Lutheran, unless he also accepted the doctrine of justification by faith.

agreement, also made his authority on all controverted subjects supreme, to the rejection of the authority of Melancthon and all others; and then, finally, it was shrunk into still narrower proportions, so as to embrace only those who, besides all this, understood his exclusive authority to mean just what the Formula of Concord taught. Thus the name Lutheran changed, just as the word Catholic, which from its general signification was narrowed down, and corrupted, to mean the Romish church. But the attempt of the signers of the Formula to palm themselves off as the only Lutherans has not succeeded, since others, who rejected the Formula, are also known in history by that name. Those who adopt that Formula with all its condemnations, are not the Lutheran Church, but merely a Lutheran sect*—a sect whose exclusiveness, intolerance, condemnatory zeal, and fanaticism have not yet been exhausted. This sect sustains to the true Lutheran Church the same relation which the Judaism of the Pharisees sustained to the Hebrew Church of Moses and the Prophets; and the same relation which the Romish Church sustains to that of the Apostles and the primitive ages. The Lutheran sect may be purer than the Pharisees and Romanists; but they are like them in the fact that they have degenerated from a purer form of religion, whilst claiming to be the very original itself; and they are similar to them, too, in intolerance, and fanaticism, and bigotry. Claiming that they alone have the pure truth, they, like Pharisee and Romanist, condemn all others. One need but read their condemnations in their Formula to be convinced that they regarded it as their mission to pass sentence on those who differed from them, to curse men who could not swear by the same formula; and their condemnations remind one forcibly of those who, in Christ's day, shut up the kingdom of heaven against all others, in the name of pure Judaism, and of those who afterwards, in the name of genuine Christianity, sentenced and executed men for claiming the right of making the Bible the supreme authority in faith.

* Luther aimed to reform the Church, to restore in its purity the Christian Church; but these persons make him the mere founder of a sect.

Bigotry, intolerance, fanaticism are essentially the same in every age.*

It must thus be evident that the Formula of Concord gave the Augsburg Confession a very different position from what it formerly occupied. The general Confession of Protestantism was claimed exclusively by a violent faction and bigoted sect. That Formula divided the Evangelical church and even those who regarded themselves as being peculiarly Lutheran. Till the adoption of the Formula of Concord the history of Protestantism is the history of one Evangelical church; from the adoption of the Formula of Concord, till the present time, we have the history of the different sects of the Evangelical church. The history of Protestantism has thus far been a history showing a development from unity to divisions; at some future age it may also have a history from divisions to unity. But that will only be when the Evangelical church takes the place of the sects, and when the fundamental doctrines of the Augsburg Confession, which we believe to be those of Christianity, shall be made the basis of unity for the different denominations. Such a basis of fundamentals only, with spiritual liberty on non-fundamentals, is the only possible condition for the unity of the church.

* Let no one think that this sect is so severely criticised, because they have the courage to differ from other Christians, or other Lutherans. Let them believe what they are honestly convinced is the truth, and answer to God for their faith. It is not their faith that is here criticised, but their unchristian spirit of denouncing and condemning all other Christians, a spirit so totally at variance with that of the Gospel, that it deserves the severest reprehension. But we will not condemn them as they do others—but will pity them, and pray God to have mercy on them, who have no mercy on others.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.

THE Schwabach Articles are found in Chytræus, History of the Augsb. Conf., 22. Weber, Kritische Geschichte d. Augs. Conf., I. Beilage. Seckendorf, 968. As these articles were freely used by Melancthon in preparing the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession, they are important in the investigation of the history of that Confession. A translation of all these articles is given below, so that each one can judge for himself of the similarity and difference between them and the Confession.

ARTICLE 1. "It is held and taught unanimously, that there is one true God, Creator of heaven and earth, also, that in the true divine Being there are three distinct Persons, namely: God one Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. That the Son, born of the Father, from eternity to eternity, is real, natural (natürlicher) God with the Father, and the Holy Ghost is from both the Father and the Son, also from eternity to eternity, is true natural God with the Father and the Son, all of which can clearly and forcibly be proved by holy Scripture, as John 1: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made, etc; and Math. 28: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and similar passages, especially in the Gospel of John."

ART. 2. "The Son of God only became true man, born of the pure Virgin Mary, with a perfect body and soul, and not the Father or the Holy Ghost became man, as the Patripassian heretics taught; neither did the Son assume the body only, without the soul, as the Photinians erringly taught, for in the Gospel he himself frequently speaks of his soul, as when he says: My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, etc. But that the Son became man, is stated clearly in John 1, thus: And the Word was made flesh; and Gal. 4: "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made unto the law."

ART. 3. "This same God the Son, true God and Man, Jesus Christ, is one indivisible Person, who for us men suffered, was crucified, died, was buried, and the third day arose again from the

dead, ascended to heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, Lord over all creatures, etc. So that it is not to be believed or taught, that Jesus Christ as a man, or the humanity, suffered for us; but thus, since God and Man here are not two persons, but one indivisible person, it is to be held and taught, that God and Man, or the Son of God, truly suffered for us, as Paul says Rom. 8: God has not spared His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. 1 Cor. 2: Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory; and similar passages."

ART. 4. "Original sin is real sin and not a mere failing or defect (nicht allein ein Fehl oder Gebrechen), but such a sin as condemns and eternally separates from God all the descendants of Adam, unless Jesus Christ had interposed in our behalf and had borne this sin and all others that flow from it, and had made atonement for the same through His sufferings, and thus entirely destroyed it, as is written clearly respecting such sin, in Ps. 50 and Rom. 5."

ART. 5. "Since now 'all men are sinners, subject to sin and death, and also to the devil, it is impossible for a man, by means of his own power or through his own works, to save himself therefrom, so as to become righteous and pious; yea, he cannot even prepare himself for righteousness, for the more he undertakes to deliver himself, the worse his condition becomes; but this is the only way to righteousness and deliverance from sin and death, to believe that the Son of God suffered, etc., for us, without relying on our merit or works. As already said, this faith is our righteousness, which God will accept and regard as really pious and holy; He will forgive all sin and will grant eternal life to all who have this faith in His Son, that for his Son's sake they may be accepted, through grace, and may be children of His kingdom, etc. All of which St. Paul, and John in his Gospel, richly teach, as Rom. 10: With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, etc. Rom. 4: Their faith is accounted to them for righteousness. John 3: All that believe on the Son shall not be lost, but have everlasting life."

ART. 6. "This faith is not a human product, nor can it be wrought by our own powers, but it is a product and gift of God, which the Holy Spirit, given through Christ, works in us; and this faith, since it is not a mere delusion or caprice of the heart, as that of the false believers, but a powerful, new, living essence, brings forth much fruit, always does good respecting God, by praise, thanksgiving, prayer, preaching and teaching; respecting our neighbors, by love, serving, helping, counselling, giving, and suffering all manner of ills even unto death."

ART. 7. "For human beings to attain such faith, or to give it to men, God has instituted the office of the ministry, or the preached word, namely, the Gospel, through which He announces His faith, and its might, its use, and its results, and through the same, as a medium, He gives this faith with His Holy Spirit, how and where He Will; and besides this there is no other mode, or manner, or

way, or means of attaining this faith. For the thoughts without or before the preached word, however holy and good they may seem to be, are nevertheless nothing but lies and errors."

ART. 8. "With and besides this preached word, God has appointed outward signs, which are called sacraments, namely, baptism and the eucharist, through which, besides the word, God offers and gives faith and His Spirit, and strengthens all who desire His help."

ART. 9. "Baptism, the first sign or sacrament, consists of two parts, namely, water and God's word, or in baptizing with water and in speaking God's word; and it is not mere water or pouring, as the scoffers at baptism now teach, but since God's word is connected with it, and since it (baptism) is based on God's word, it is a holy, living, powerful thing, and as St. Paul says, Tit. 3 and Ep. 5, the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Such baptism is also to be performed on children. The words of God, on which baptism is founded, are: Go and baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, Mat. 28; and Mark 16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved—thus one must believe."

ART. 10. "The Eucharist, or sacrament of the altar, also consists of two parts, namely, there are really present (*wahrhaftiglich gegenwärtig*) in the bread and wine, the true body and blood of Christ, according to the words of Christ: This is my body, this is my blood; and there is not mere bread and wine, as our opponents teach. These words require faith and also produce faith, and also exercise the same in all those who desire the sacrament, and do not act inconsistently therewith, just as baptism also produces and gives faith, if one desires it (baptism)."

ART. 11. "Private confession is not to be made compulsory by law, just as baptism, the Lord's Supper and the Gospel are not to be made compulsory, but should be free; but that it may be known how very comforting and salutary, useful and good it (private confession) is for the afflicted or erring consciences, because in it absolution, that is, God's word and decision are uttered, through which the conscience is guided and freed from its burden, it is not necessary to relate all sins, but those may be mentioned which gnaw at the heart and disquiet it."

ART. 12. "There is no doubt, that there will always remain and be on earth, a holy Christian Church, till the end of the world, as Christ says, Mat. 28: I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. This church is nothing else than believers in Christ, who believe and teach the above articles, and consequently are persecuted and martyred in the world; for where the Gospel is preached and the sacraments are properly used, there is the holy Christian Church, and it is not bound with law and external pomp to the state and to time, to persons and to ceremonies."

ART. 13. "Our Lord Jesus Christ will come at the last day to judge the quick and the dead, will deliver His believers from all evil and bring them into everlasting life, will punish the unbe-

lievers and the wicked, and with the devils condemn them forever into hell."

ART. 14. "However, until the Lord comes to judgment and destroys all power and dominion, temporal rulers and authorities are to be held in honor and are to be obeyed as a class ordained of God, to protect the good and to check the wicked. Such a rank a Christian, when properly called to it, may hold and serve in, without injury or danger to his faith or his salvation. Rom. 13. 1 Pet. 2."

ART. 15. "From all this it follows, that the doctrine which forbids priests and the clergy to marry, and all Christians to eat meat and food, also all cloister-life and vows, are altogether damned and hellish-doctrine, since through them grace and salvation are sought, and they are not left free, as Paul says, 1 Tim. 4, that Christ alone is the only way to grace and salvation."

ART. 16. "Above all abominations the mass, which has heretofore been regarded as a sacrifice or work by means of which one attempted to acquire grace for another, is to be abolished; and instead of this mass, a divine order of worship is to be instituted, and the holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ is to be given in both kinds to each one on his faith and according to his need."

ART. 17. "The ceremonies of the church which are opposed to God's word are to be abolished, but in respect to the others there should be freedom to use them or not, according to inclination, so that no offence be given without cause, nor the common peace be disturbed unnecessarily."

APPENDIX B.

In the original, the word translated "next to it," or "on the margin," is "*daneben*." That this translation is correct, is so evident from a comparison with the original, that it is really a wonder that any one can be found to dispute it. The original is: "Und ist unser genedigs begeren, Ir wollet dieselbenn artigkel weiter zu ubersehen und zu bewegen unbeschwert sein und wo es euch dermassen gefellig oder ichtwas darvon oder darzuzusetzen bedechtet, *das wollet also daneben vorzeichnen*." German scholars, who understand their own language and who have no interest in perverting its clear meaning, translate "*daneben*," as is done in the text—"on the margin." So Schmidt—*Life of Melancthon*—p. 197, where the elector's letter is thus interpreted, that in it Luther is requested to write his opinion of the Confession "on the margin," "was er zu bemerken habe, möge er *am Rand verzeichnen*." Rückert uses the same words, "on the margin," in interpreting the letter, p. 26: "seine etwaigen Bemerkungen *am Rande* beizuschreiben." Rudelback has the same view when he says, "*Hist. Krit. Einleit. in d. Augsb. Conf.*" p. 94, that the elector requested Luther to write his opinion "in brief," "in der Kürze." The English translation of the

Book of Concord, Introduction, says—"by some little notes or remarks," p. 38—in all of which cases "daneben" is taken in the sense of—"on the margin," where the hints of approval or alteration were to be made. And in all probability not a German author can be found who uses "daneben" in this sentence, in the sense of "at the same time." But in this country an effort has been made to prove that Luther had much more to do with the preparation of the Confession than was really the case, and for this purpose it was thought necessary to show, that the elector did not request Luther to write his opinion of the draft of the Confession sent him May 11th "on the margin," as German scholars understand that letter; and to obviate this difficulty the words of the elector have been thus translated: "And it is our desire that you would further revise the same, and give them a thorough examination, and at the same time (daneben) you would also write how you like it, etc." "Also darneben" is translated "*also at the same time.*" Without further discussion the interpretation of the original may safely be left to every one who understands the original. But a very strange argument is used to prove that "daneben" cannot mean "on the margin." Melancthon's letter to Luther of May 11th is used for this purpose, and it is made to request Luther to write his opinion of the Confession on a separate paper, and consequently not "on the margin." We will give the translation of this letter as made for the purpose of proving this, and then will give the translation of the original, without leaving out the very parts which are essential in forming a correct opinion of what the letter says on this subject. The translation which we quote reads as follows: "Our Apology is sent to you, although it is more properly a Confession, for the emperor will have no time for protracted discussion. Nevertheless, I have said these things which I thought most profitable or fitting. With this design I have embraced nearly all the articles of faith, for Eck has put forth the most diabolical slanders against us to which I wished to oppose a remedy. I request you, in accordance with your own spirit, to decide concerning the whole writing (*Pro tuo spiritu de toto scriptu statues*). A question is *referred to you*, to which I greatly desire an answer from you. What if the emperor . . . should prohibit our ministers from preaching at Augsburg. I have answered that we should yield to the wish of the emperor, in whose city we are guests. But our old man is difficult to soften." (The "old man" is either the elector John, so called to distinguish him from his son, John Frederick, or the old chancellor Bruck.) "Whatever therefore you think, I beg that you will write it *in German on separate paper.*" The author of this translation adds: "What Luther was to write was his judgment both as to the Confession and the question about preaching, and the "separate paper," on which he was particularly requested to write, must mean separate from that which held the Confession. One probable reason why Luther was so particularly requested not, as was very much his wont, to write upon the margin, was, that this original draft of

the Confession might have been needed for presentation to the emperor." In this translation of Melanchthon's letter and the deduction from it we have a remarkable instance of the use sometimes made of historical documents. The original letter of Melanchthon does not ask Luther to write his opinion respecting the Confession at all; but it simply asks him to write his opinion on the subject of preaching in Augsburg "in German on separate paper." When the entire letter is given, this is so clear, that we confess our inability to see, how it was possible to draw the conclusion that Luther was requested to write his "judgment both as to the Confession and the question about preaching" on separate paper. Without leaving out the very sentence which decides the whole question and without any other mutilation, we shall give a translation of the letter, retaining as nearly as possible the words in the translation given above, but inserting the parts omitted. The letter is found in the original (Latin) in Corp. Ref. II. No. 685; in German, "Melanchthon's Werke" by Koethe, I. p. 225, "Our Apology is sent to you, although it is more properly a Confession, for the emperor will have no time for protracted discussion. Nevertheless, I have said those things which I thought most profitable or fitting. With this design I have embraced nearly all the articles of faith, for Eck has put forth the most diabolical slanders against us, to which I wished to oppose a remedy. You will judge of the whole writing in accordance with your own spirit. *Duke George and Margrave Joachim have gone to the emperor; there they will deliberate respecting our throats. You will therefore pray God, that He may bring to naught the counsel of those nations that desire war.* A question is referred to you, to which I greatly desire an answer from you. *There is no doubt that the emperor will prohibit the Zwinglian sermons. Therefore we suspect that under this pretext our sermons will also be prohibited, for Agricola now preaches in a public church. What therefore is your opinion? Shall the public pulpit be abandoned if the emperor request it, so that without commotion the Zwinglian sermons may be prohibited?* I replied that we ought to yield to the will of the emperor in whose city we are guests. But our old man is obstinate. Whatever therefore you think, I beg that you will write it in German on separate paper. *I pray you to reply concerning this matter.*" The italics are the parts omitted in the other translation. The last sentence, which is also omitted, shows conclusively that Luther was requested only to write his opinion about the preaching, for the singular is used "concerning *this* matter," not concerning these matters, which would have been necessary if both the Confession and the preaching had been referred to. The original is: "Amabo te, hac de re velis respondere;" the German: "Bitte aber freundlich, Ihr wollet von dieser Sache antworten." Why this decisive sentence is omitted in the other translation, we do not know. Every one will see that the entire letter, without omission or mutilation, gives no hint that Luther was requested to write his views of the Confession on separate paper, but only his views on preaching.

Luther made no changes in the draft of the Confession sent him, nor did he give his approval or disapproval of any part in particular; but in his letter to the elector May 15th, he gives a general opinion of the whole. And to the question about preaching submitted to him he gave an answer distinct and separate from this letter.

APPENDIX C.

Rudelbach is quite an authority with the strict Lutherans in Germany; and as his views on the subject discussed in this chapter are based on historical evidence, they are quoted in the original, with the hope that they may have some weight with those who sympathise with him doctrinally. He says, p. 47: "Das Bekenntnis, war zugleich, wie der Kaiser wünschte, die Einleitung zu gütlicher Verhandlung; keineswegs durfte die Hoffnung aufgegeben werden, die Widersacher zu gewinnen und dasjenige zu retten was die Gestalt der Kirche in dem Römischen Kirchenstaats-Verbande fast unkenntlich gemacht hatte. Es musste dieser Standpunkt um so fester gehalten werden, je offener einerseits die Entwicklung des Gegensatzes innerhalb der Römischen Kirche gar nicht möglich gewesen wäre, wenn nicht früher diese Kirche durch Reinheit und Lebendigkeit des Bekenntnisses sich ausgezeichnet hätte (in der Griechischen Kirche entstand eine solche Opposition nicht, und konnte wegen der schon seit dem siebenten Jahrhunderte eintretenden Stagnation nicht entstehen), und je allgemeiner die Behauptung der Römischen Kirche als der *universalen* in den Volksglauben übergegangen war. Sowohl Pietät gegen die frühern geistlich Blutsverwandten, als Schonung der irrenden Gewissen musste den Ton der Confession stimmen und mildern. Die Bekenner mussten wie der theilnehmende Arzt zu den Gliedern der Römischen Kirche hinzutreten, und sagen: 'Sehet, wie viele kostbare und theure Güter ihr mit uns zu verwahren habt auf den Tag der Erscheinung Jesu Christi! Wollet ihr denn diese ganz verschleudern durch mehrere den edelsten Mark des Glaubens aussaugende Lehren, durch Mißbräuche, die die kirchliche Anstalt zu einer Folterbank der Gewissen machen? Wollet ihr zugeben, dass was meistens nur um irdischen Gewinnes willen, nur um gewisse *Meinungen* von Kirchenhäuptern zu schmücken erfunden ward, auch sofort *kirchlichen* Stempel erlange und behalte? Dann ist ja der Rückweg zum Evangelium offenbar versperrt, die Reformation, die die Kirche seit Jahrhunderten fordert, unmöglich gemacht.' Dieser *suasorische* Geist geht in der That auch durch die Augsburgerische Confession, weshalb sie sich in der Vorrede auch freudig anschliesst an den in dem Kaiserlichen Ausschreiben ausgesprochenen Zweck. Die Bekennenden sind sich innig bewusst, dass sie auf demselben symbolischen Fundament mit der Römischen Kirche ruhen; die der

Römischen Kirche eigenthümlichen, zum Theil den Grund des Glaubens gefährdenden, Sätze werden zwar bestimmt verworfen, aber doch theils durch ein milderndes *rejicere* im Gegensatz zum *damnare* der Hoffnung einer Aussöhnung Raum gelassen, theils die zarteste Schonung in der blossen Bezeichnung dieser Irrlehren, ohne namentliche Angabe, wo sie sich finden, beobachtet." Speaking of the mild manner in which the abuses are treated in the second part of the Confession, the author continues: "Auch hier wird auf Billigkeit und Menschlichkeit der Widersacher viel Rechnung gemacht, und gleichsam der Weg ihnen mlt Fingern gezeigt, wie sie Alles wieder ausgleichen, und die gewünschte Einmüthigkeit wiederherstellen könnten. Die denkbaren Entschuldigungsgründe werden nicht unerwähnt gelassen, die Hoffnung im Ganzen nicht aufgeben, und nur im äussersten Falle auf die Ueberhauung des Knotens nach Apostolischer Vorschrift hingewiesen. Zuletzt aber wird noch die Vermahnung hinzugefügt, dass nichts im Bekenntnisse zu Jemandes Verunglimpfung gesagt sein solle." Only when the Romanists rejected the friendly hand of the Protestants did the latter change their standpoint. "Das verhältniss änderte sich und musste sich ändern, als die Römisch-Katholischen die wohlwollend dargebotene Hand nicht annahmen."

APPENDIX D.

In Corp. Ref., II., Nos. 761, 762, 763, are three letters of Melancthon to Cardinal Campeggio, dated July 6th and 7th, 1580. They are utterly unworthy of the learned reformer and the cause he represented. He flattered the cardinal's vanity, calls him "most reverend lord," and speaks of him as "not only excelling other men in greatness but also in wisdom." After thus humiliating himself before him, who was really his inferior in learning and in real greatness, Melancthon continues to address the cardinal, who urged the emperor to use the most violent means to destroy the Reformation, in the following language: "Ego igitur cum existimarem, R. D. T. (Reverendissimam Dominationem Tuam) in ista sapientia quam maxime a violentis consiliis abhorrere, duxi ad R. D. T. scribendum esse, ut et nos intelligeret unice cupidos esse pacis atque concordiae, nec detrectare ullam tolerabilem faciundae pacis conditionem. Dogma nullum habemus diversum ab Ecclesia Romana. Multos etiam repressimus quod perniciose dogmata serere conati sunt, cujus rei extant publica testimonia.

Parati sumus obedire Ecclesiae Romanae, modo ut illa pro sua clementia, qua semper erga omnes gentes usa est, pauca quaedam vel dissimulet, vel relaxet, quae jam mutare ne quidem si velimus queamus.

Nequi fidem habeat R. D. T. malevolis nostris, qui nostrorum scripta scelerate depravant et affingunt, quidquid videtur ad inflammenda publica odia quoquo modo facere. Ad haec Romani Pontificis

auctoritatem et universam politiam ecclesiasticam reverenter colimus, modo nos non abjiciat Romanus Pontifex.

Cum autem concordia facile possit constitui, si æquitas vestra paucis in rebus conniveat, et nos bona fide obedientiam reddamus, quorsum opus est, supplices? quorsum opus est supplices ferro et igno persequi? Mihi non dubium est, quin R. D. T. nullo modo probatura sit illa violenta consilia, si causam nostram et voluntates nostras penitus norit. Nullam etiam ob rem aliam plus odii sustinemus in Germania, quam quia Ecclesiæ Romanæ dogmata summa constantia defendimus. Hanc fidem Christo et Romanæ Ecclesiæ ad extremum spiritum, Deo volente, præstabimus, (vel si recusabitis nos in gratiam recipere). Levis quædam dissimilitudo rituum est, quæ videtur obsistere concordiæ." This is enough. These words, which are taken from the first letter, clearly show how the threatening aspect of affairs, at that time, completely overcame Melancthon. In this same letter and in the other two, similar expressions, humbly supplicating peace, are found. How blessed for the Evangelical Church, that Melancthon was not allowed to make all the concessions he was willing to make for the sake of union and peace!

On the 4th of August, Melancthon again addressed letters on the same subject to the cardinal and his secretary, which are similar to the above. Corp. Ref. No. 819 and 820.

APPENDIX E.

The articles prepared by Eck, showing wherein the Confession agreed with and differed from the doctrines of the Romish Church, are in substance the same as the Confutation. For this reason, and because they give the papal view of the Confession, they are here given. They are found in Chytræus 173-175. Dr. Eck takes up the articles of the Confession seriatim and says:

"The first article, of one divine Being and three persons, agrees with the Christian Church.

The second article, that there is original sin, agrees with the Church. But the explanation of what original sin is, does not agree with the Church. The medium course would be, for them to say that the inherited evil desire is sin before baptism, and after baptism it is a consequence or punishment of original sin, and not sin per se.

On the third article, concerning Christ Jesus, we are agreed.

The fourth article agrees with the Church in saying, that we cannot be saved by means of our own powers; but it disagrees in this respect, that it ascribes righteousness to faith and entirely excludes our merit. The medium course to unity (der mittel Weg zur Einigkeit) is, for them to attribute righteousness to faith which works by

love, which St. Paul teaches in Gal. 5. They ought, however, to omit the word "sola," for by it the plain people will be induced to believe that faith alone, without the grace of God and good works, justifies.

Concerning merit they would agree with us, if they expressed themselves thus, that works according to their own nature are not meritorious, but only through the mercy of God, through God's grace, which assists us, which anticipates us and coöperates with us, thus the Lord gives his reward for its Labor.

The fifth article agrees with us, that the Holy Spirit is given through the word and the sacraments as means ordained for this purpose. Concerning faith, however, and the merit of good works the teaching ought to be as indicated above, in the fourth article.

The sixth article, that faith with love produces good works, agrees with the Church; concerning faith the teaching ought to be as indicated above.

The seventh article does not agree, since they say that the Christian Church is an assembly of the pious only, whereas there are in it both godly and ungodly persons. It could be harmonized, if they would say, the Christian Church is a communion of saints, just as we call the Christian Church holy on account of the holiness of faith, the sacraments, the graces and gifts. For from its most important element an object receives its name; and they themselves acknowledge that there may be ministers of the Church who are not pious.

The eighth article, concerning priests who are not pious, agrees. Also the ninth.

The tenth article agrees with us as far as the real presence of the body and blood of Christ is concerned. But it must not be interpreted to mean that the laity are to receive both the elements.

The eleventh article agrees with the Church as far as absolution is concerned; but does not agree respecting confession. This will be treated in the second part, fourth article.

The twelfth article, that those who have sinned after baptism can repent again, agrees with the Church. But as far as repentance is concerned it does not agree. It could, however, be harmonized, since with us they place remorse and sorrow for the first part. We, however, place faith with both parts; and they here regard faith as a part of repentance; we say that faith is not a part of repentance; but faith precedes it as the basis of repentance. Therefore it is more a dispute about words than about the thing itself. And since they allow confession, they should, with the Church, regard it as the second part of repentance. Besides this, we add atonement as the third part of repentance. They, however, confess that the fruits of good works ought to follow, so that again it is rather a dispute about words than the thing itself.

The thirteenth article agrees with the Church.

The fourteenth article agrees with the Church as far as the words are concerned, but in reality they believe otherwise, since they do

not call curates and preachers according to the common laws or the rules of regular bishops, which would be a proper call.

The fifteenth article agrees in its principal part. Human traditions will be considered below in the last article.

The sixteenth article, of civil government, agrees with us.

The seventeenth article, of Christ's return, agrees with us.

The eighteenth article, of freewill, agrees.

The nineteenth article, of the cause of sin, agrees with the Church.

The twentieth article, of faith and good works, excuses only the preachers, therefore it is not to be rejected; but concerning this matter it is to be taught as indicated in the fourth article.

The twenty-first article, of the worship of saints, does not agree with us. For here are three parts, remembrance of the saints (with respect for them), worship of the saints, and their intercession for us. The remembrance of the saints the Lutherans concede, the other two they deny. The sacramentarians concede the intercession of the saints. In this respect no harmony is possible, unless they confess with the Church; since a living one can call upon a living one to intercede for him, a mortal upon a mortal, a sinner upon a sinner, a beggar upon a beggar, why then should he not be able to call upon one who is immortal, righteous, free from sin, rich in grace, goodness and compassion, and who is heartily and affectionately interested in our welfare."

In reference to the second part of the Confession, the articles on abuses, Dr. Eck thinks the Protestants might be allowed to receive the wine in the Lord's Supper, until a general council met and decided the whole matter, but under the following conditions: children were not to be allowed to commune, and the Protestants were to teach that both elements were not necessary, and that the communicants received as much under one as under both.

The marriage of priests he severely censures. Those who had married were to be tolerated as common adulterers and were to be deprived of their office till a council met. On the mass he proposed that the Lord's Supper be not regarded as a bloody sacrifice, like that on the cross, but that the Protestants should acknowledge, that just as in the Old Testament the body of Christ was figuratively, and on the cross really sacrificed, so in the mass it is sacrificed as a mystery, which mysterious sacrifice is a memorial of the sacrifice on the cross. Private mass was not to be abolished.

On confession he proposes that the Protestants should acknowledge, that the sins which one knows ought to be confessed, then they would agree with the Church.

The fifth article on the abuses he considers with the seventh.

On vows, he says, no agreement can be made, for the vows once taken must be kept; therefore the Church cannot tolerate this article.

The seventh article, he says, does not agree with the Church, for it deprives her of her government and the power to make rules for her subjects, hence it would destroy all church discipline and order.

He thinks, however, that an agreement might be made, if certain church rules were tolerated, or if some were moderated, but in such a manner that no fleshly liberty would arise therefrom.

In summing up the whole, Eck gives the following as the most difficult to agree upon:

The worship of saints; both the elements in the eucharist; marriage of priests; vows; the sacrifice of the mass; and the traditions. He says: "I regard these six articles as the most difficult, but on the other articles an agreement might be easy, if two princes and two theologians of each party would meet."

APPENDIX F.

It was most important to state explicitly those doctrines on which there was dispute with the Papists. Melancthon's discussions with them, as well as a more thorough study of the various subjects, enabled him to see more clearly what points needed amplification or more explicit statement. Hence it was natural for him to change most of all those very articles on which the Protestants differed most from the Papists. Not every change that was made indicates a change of doctrine, whilst some undoubtedly originated from the fact that Melancthon had actually changed his mind on those subjects. In many instances the change was merely verbal, and ought, perhaps, rather be called an improvement than an alteration. To give some idea of the liberty Melancthon took with the Confession, I will give a translation from the German of the 4th article as it is supposed, according to various manuscripts, to have been in the original, and then I will give the same article as it appears in the German edition of 1540. In the first it reads: "It is also taught, that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God, through our merits, work, and atonement, but that we obtain pardon and are justified before God by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, if we believe that Christ suffered for us, and that for His sake our sins are forgiven, and righteousness and eternal life are bestowed on us. For God will regard this faith and impute it as righteousness in His sight, as Paul says, Rom. 3d and 4th." In the German edition of 1540 this article reads: "And since all men after Adam's fall, who are born naturally, bring with them natural sin and are condemned, neither obey nor can obey God's law from the heart, and cannot free themselves from their sinful nature, full of contempt for, and hatred of God, etc., we cannot obtain forgiveness of our sin by means of our good works, nor are we regarded as righteous before God, nor are we acceptable unto Him, on account of our good works. But God has sent Christ, the Mediator and Redeemer, and has given us the Gospel, which preaches repentance and forgiveness for Christ's sake, as is written in the last chapter of Luke; that is, it shows us our sins and God's wrath on their ac-

count, and withal offers us pardon, righteousness, the Holy Ghost, and eternal life, for Christ's sake, so that we may not remain in sin and eternal death.

"And the Gospel also teaches, that we obtain forgiveness without any merit, and not on account of our merits, but it is given us for Christ's sake, if we believe in Christ, that is, if we believe confidently that God, for Christ's sake, will certainly forgive us; for if this forgiveness depended on our merits or worthiness, we would be in doubt whether God had forgiven us, since the heart, when we feel God's wrath and judgment, finds no work of its own so worthy as to pay for our sins, or so powerful as to console the heart and deliver from eternal death: yes, since the natural man is full of wicked and sinful lust, we find in ourselves no pure deed and no perfect obedience to God. Therefore in the Gospel forgiveness is bestowed upon us as a free gift, for Christ's sake, so that it may be certain, as Paul clearly teaches and argues, that it is gratuitous, that is, that it must be known that pardon is not the result of our merits, but is given us in the Gospel gratuitously, for Christ's sake, although we are unworthy, and he says, Rom. 4, by grace, through faith, that the promise may be firm and sure, and that we may not doubt whether we are forgiven, but are to trust and believe that our sins are certainly forgiven for Christ's sake. This is the principal article of the Gospel, that forgiveness is offered without any merits in us, for Christ's sake; and the Fathers teach on this subject, just as we have spoken of it, for Ambrosius says in plain language: Therefore it is decreed by God, that whosoever believeth on Christ shall be saved, and not on account of his works, but only through faith, without merit, shall have forgiveness. Thus we obtain pardon through faith, because faith relies, not on personal worthiness, but on the mercy promised in Christ, for mercy cannot otherwise be recognized or accepted than by faith.

"And faith here means, not merely a knowledge of the history of Christ and a belief of its truth, but it means a belief in the promise in which, for Christ's sake, remission of sin and eternal life are promised certainly, which promise also belongs to the history of Christ, as in the Creed to the history this article is attached: the forgiveness of sin. And all other articles respecting Christ should be referred to this one, (or should be made dependent on this one—the original is: "Und sollen auff diesen Artikel die andern alle von Christo zogen werden,") since for this cause Christ came, died and rose again, that we for his sake and through him might obtain remission of sin and life everlasting."

The reason of stating this doctrine of justification so much more explicitly in the altered editions than in 1530, is no doubt found in the fact that the Papists attacked it with the greatest violence, since it overthrew their entire system of work-holiness. Melancthon, regarding this as the chief doctrine of the Gospel, was particularly anxious to state it as clearly as possible, and give it the greatest possible strength.

In his altered editions Melanchthon was also careful to refute the charge of the Papists, that the Protestants preached faith without works, by showing more clearly the necessity of good works. This is especially evident from the alterations in the 20th Article.

APPENDIX G.

Weber, in his critical history of the Confession, vol. I., p. 59, says: "In the first period of the Evangelical Church, while it was still in a flourishing condition, no one troubled himself about the original text of the Augsburg Confession. The reason was, partly because it was believed, and very properly too, that Melanchthon, in his quarto edition of 1530 and 1531, had given a good and correct copy of the Latin and German Confession, partly because at that time the Confession was not yet regarded as a document of symbolical authority for the Protestant church, nor was it intended to be such by the princes; for they had only had drawn up the most important articles of religion which were in dispute. Therefore Melanchthon believed, and probably the first reformers too, that the articles presented at Augsburg might still be developed and improved; and history proves that the Evangelical Church used the different editions of Melanchthon, without making any distinction between them, until the adoption of the Formula of Concord, as I could quote many proofs from the most distinguished theologians, who approved and praised Melanchthon's additions to and further development of the Confession. It was in those dark days after Luther's death, when the Evangelical church was distracted by internal dissensions, when sectarians took refuge behind the Confession, when the strictly orthodox, blind zealots, and heresy-hunters wanted to sift out of the improved Confession Pelagianism, Synergism, Sacramentarianism, and such heresies—then it was that the original was first thought of, it being regarded as the medicine to heal the wounds of the church and restore pure Lutheranism."

Weber, II., 307: "I can boldly assert, that during Melanchthon's lifetime not the least reproach was cast on him by the Evangelical theologians on account of his alterations and improvements of the Augsburg Confession."

Weber, II., 413, in closing his remarks on the various editions of the Confession, says, that Melanchthon ought to be excused for altering the Confession, and that for doing this he has been unjustly blamed by theologians, "who, owing to prejudice, interest, and passion, were changeable in their opinions in general, and also in reference to their opinion of the alterations, which they at first praised and defended against the Papists, and at last even walked in the footsteps of the Papists; and they especially decried and degraded these alterations at the introduction of the Formula of Con-

cord. Their utterances have been handed down from one century to another, and this is the reason that sometimes in our days yet a dull echo of the anti-Philippistical (anti-Melanchthonian) age against the altered editions is heard, at which, however, the sensible theologian smiles, leaving the echo, with all its discords, to its own course, since he knows that the clamor emanates from foul springs and swamps, which will eventually dry up completely. In short, the history of the altered editions is a real study of humanity, for it is convincing proof how times, circumstances, and passions change and transform men in respect to their judgments and mode of thinking. For the altered editions, which in the contests with the Sacramentarians became a rock of offense to the later Evangelical Church, were received with approbation in the earlier Evangelical Church, whilst establishing itself, because that church, in its contests with the Papists, found these altered editions, on account of their further development of doctrine, a stronger and firmer bulwark than the very Confession which had been presented at Augsburg. In other words, what the theologians in the Evangelical Church during the period of its formation regarded as blossom and fruit on the tree of truth, which was planted at Augsburg in 1530 by the confessors, and which was afterwards tended and cultivated by Melanchthon, seemed to their descendants as an excrescence and watershoots which, as a later one thinks, ought to have been cut off, as soon as they made their appearance, by Luther or the elector."

Weber, II., 403: "Neither Luther nor the early Evangelical Church found anything dangerous in the 10th article of the Latin edition of 1540. More than this, Westphal, who renewed the dispute about the Lord's Supper, and also Eitzen, his aid in the dispute, and the Weimar *Confutationsbuch* quoted it as orthodox, and with it defended Luther's doctrine against Calvin and the Zwinglians."

Many other authorities might be quoted to show that during the Reformation (till 1560) there was no opposition on the part of the Protestants to Melanchthon's alterations. Schmidt, life of Melanchthon, p. 373, note, says: "As long as Melanchthon lived, the *Variata* of 1540 was opposed by no one; even his opponents used it without any scruples. Afterwards some asserted that the changes had been made with Luther's approbation, whilst others asserted that he had been opposed to them. In the documents of that period nothing can be found on this subject; but from a letter of Luther to the elector (May 10th, 1541, Luther's letters, vol. V., p. 357) it is evident that he was not opposed to them; he says that at the colloquy at Ratisbon, Melanchthon adhered to the beloved Confession, and in this respect remained pure and firm; Luther could only mean the Confession of 1540, especially since he knew that at the colloquy of Worms, Eck at first refused to dispute on the basis of this edition, and only consented to do so after Melanchthon had spoken to him on the subject." Here, then, we have another proof from Luther's letters that he approved of Melanchthon's alterations.

In the same note we have the following quotation from Heppe's Philip Melanchthon, p. 89: "In the years immediately following, so many copies of this edition (1540) were circulated that the former editions gradually disappeared and were neglected. In many countries it was at once introduced, as in Hesse, where the landgrave, Philip, secured a copy for every parish. In the year 1561 yet, at the assembly of the princes at Naumburg, it was explicitly approved by nearly all the Evangelical princes." Thus we find one of the original signers of the Confession presenting every parish in his land with the altered edition.

This same Schmidt, in the *Life of Melanchthon*, p. 372, shows the necessity for the alterations. The mild language originally used in the Confession was now, he thinks, no longer necessary, since an agreement with the Catholics seemed to be no longer possible. "Besides this, the opponents misused the Confession of 1530 for the purpose of interpreting its 'milder' language to their advantage, and for the purpose of demanding from the Protestants concessions which they could no longer make. On this account more definiteness in the Confession was made necessary. Melanchthon had a right to regard himself justified in pursuing this course, not only because he saw how favorably his *Loci*, which had been entirely remodelled in 1535, was received, but also because till now no one had publicly opposed his alterations of the Confession; the great majority in the Evangelical Church did not yet think of regarding it as a stereotyped law. In the edition of 1540 Melanchthon arranged some parts better, and developed others more fully, for the purpose of showing more distinctly the difference from Romanism; at the same time he now for the first time made some changes in reference to the doctrines. In the fourth and fifth articles he inserted additions on the necessity of repentance and the preaching of the same; he made more mild several expressions which could be interpreted to favor predestination and the superfluity of good works; but the most important was the remodelling of the article on the Lord's Supper, of which more shall be said below. This edition was received without any scruples; neither Luther nor the elector, who must necessarily have known it, complained of it; even those who usually found fault with Melanchthon were silent."

The Protestants were urged in 1551 by the emperor to send delegates to the council of Trent. They supposed that a confession of their faith would be required of them by the council. They did not, however, conclude to send the unaltered Augsburg Confession to the council; but just as in 1537 Luther had prepared new articles for the council to be held at Mantua, so now Melanchthon was requested to prepare articles for the council of Trent. This confession Melanchthon preferred to call "*Repetition of the Augsburg Confession*." It was in harmony with the altered editions of the Confession, and with Melanchthon's later editions of his *Loci*. Circumstances occurred which prevented the presentation of this

confession. But the very fact that for the council of Trent a confession was prepared by the Protestants in harmony with the altered editions, shows the prevalence and authority of those editions at that time. The altered Confession, not the original, was the one generally used at this time, and was regarded as a stronger protest against Rome's corruptions than the original; it was, in fact, the great Confession of Protestantism. An account of the "Repetition," and also of the "Wurtemberg Confession," which was prepared for the same council by Brentz, is found in Heppe, *Conf. Entw.*, pp. 141-154.

That the altered Confession was the one generally used from 1540 till the close of the Reformation, and for some time afterwards, is so well established that the fact is now generally acknowledged by those who have at all investigated the matter. The altered Confession was adopted by a general Synod of the church of the Palatinate of the Rhine, in 1854. It was published by the consistory of Spiers with this title: "The Confession of the Christian faith presented to the emperor at Augsburg in 1530, as the same appeared in print in 1540, was presented anew to the emperor by the united Protestant states in 1541 and 1546, at Worms and Ratisbon, introduced into the Palatinate in 1554 by elector Ottheinrich, into Saxony in 1555, confirmed anew in 1558 by the convention at Frankfurt, and in 1561 by the convention of princes at Naumburg, signed and sworn to by Calvin and Olivean; contains the doctrine on which the two Evangelical (Lutheran and Reformed) churches have always agreed, and on which they have united." Heppe, *Confess. Entw.*, XVII.

APPENDIX H.

Cœlestin examined the archives at Mentz in 1566, and pretended to have secured an exact copy of the German original Confession, and also asserted that he had seen the original Latin there. Chytræus afterwards published, in his *History of the Confession*, what also purported to be an exact copy of the original German Confession, taken from the same manuscript. I have compared the two, and find that they are by no means exactly alike, hence they cannot both be exact copies of the same manuscript even. Thus the text in the Book of Concord, Art. 2, reads "keine ware Gottesfurcht, kein waren Glauben an Gott, von Natur haben koennen;" but in Chytræus the passage reads: "keine ware Gottesfurcht, kein ware Gotteslieb, kein waren Glauben an Gott," etc., a difference which with others shows clearly that both men did not give exact copies. The fact is, the authors of the Book of Concord were grossly imposed on by Cœlestin.

Müller, in his *Introduction*, sums up some of the results of Weber's investigation. I quote from the second American (Newmarket)

edition, p. 52-53. Speaking of the effort to recover the original text, he says: "Now where was this to be found, if not in the archives of Mentz? With this view, the elector, Joachim II., of Brandenburg, at first sent, in company with the archbishop Sigismund of Magdeburg, in the year 1566, the court chaplain, George Cœlestin, and the counsellor Andrew Zoch, to Mentz, for the purpose of collating the original found there. The same thing occurred in 1576, by order of the elector, August of Saxony, and the German text recovered by these two collations has been introduced into the Book of Concord. In this they believed they had the true original, and, by virtue of the official testimony of the chancellors of Mentz, they could believe nothing else. Pfaff, the chancellor of Tübingen, was the first to excite a doubt on this subject. During his residence in Schwabach, in 1729, he had an opportunity to seek for the original in the public archives of that place, but it could not be found, and he declared the copy found in the Register, which is called Protocol, to be the original, after [which] the abovementioned collations were made. The assertion of Pfaff, however, received the less credit, as, in a short time after this, Feuerlein, a member of the consistory, made known the declaration of Gudenus, the assessor of the judicial court, according to which the German as well as the Latin original still existed entire in the archives. Feuerlein has even described the external appearance of the German copy, as being a book in small quarto form, bound in black leather, with red edges; and from this, the duchess dowager of Weimar, who, at the instance of Seidler, the chief counsellor of the consistory, had asked for a transcript of the authentic text, received an accredited transcript as a copy of the true original. Weber, the minister of the collegiate church, had this printed, and, as it presented a text quite different from that of the Book of Concord, it could not escape various assaults from every side. In this exigency, Weber was induced to search the archives himself, and found, to his astonishment, that the text which he had published was a copy of the edition of 1540, which Griesbach had already indicated, in his critical dissertations. It is really astonishing that the civil council could presume to call this printed copy an original, while on the very title of it "Wittemburg, 1540" appeared! The further researches of Weber were attended with similar results. The original copy delivered to the emperor Charles, in 1530, had long since disappeared, and very probably it was sent, with other public documents, to Trent in 1546, and had not been returned. The investigations which took place in the year 1566 and 1576, were conducted in accordance with a transcript, which Weber discovered under the name of Protocol. From this it is perceived that Cœlestin, upon whose authority the credibility of the German and Latin text of the Confession received into the Book of Concord, principally depends, was either dishonest, or at least very insincere. This Latin text, which he wishes to consider the original [taken] from the one preserved at Mentz, which indeed was never there, is

the reprint of one published by Fabricius, and his German text is merely a transcript of the Protocol above mentioned; and yet he and the civil counsellors published it as the original. In addition to this, it also appeared that this Protocol had no subscribers at all, although Cœlestin exhibits some names, yet not the full number.

"Hence it is to be inferred that our text in the Book of Concord by no means presents that of the true original. Indeed we are obliged to acknowledge, still further, that it has been taken from a copy of the Confession which has no small number of errors, namely, typographical errors, omissions, and transposition of sentences."

APPENDIX I.

Only some of the principal proofs that the Augsburg Confession was not binding during the Reformation have been given. It is not necessary to add more, since every complete history of the Reformation is full of them. If the practice in reference to the authority of the Confession, which we have indicated, was not universal, it was so nearly so that the exceptions are unknown. In summing up the result of his investigation on this subject, Scheidler, 62-63, says: "What now is the result of the whole? Clearly this, that Luther, Melancthon, and the other theologians, and with them the Protestant princes and their counsellors *by no means regarded the Augsburg Confession as a symbolical book*, (*"die Augsburg Confession durchaus nicht als symbolisches Buch ansahen"*), and that Melancthon did not do wrong in regarding it as his work, (which according to generally acknowledged laws of authority it was—"als sein Werk was sie nach allgemeingültigen Rechtsgrundsätzen über Autorschaft war"), and consequently to improve it according to the best of his knowledge as he did his other private works." "This much at all events remains certain, that this false view of the unalterableness of the Augsburg Confession was foreign to the reformers, who regarded themselves as men created to spread farther and farther light and truth, and who could not so much as imagine that the salvation of the souls of those who had been delivered from the idolatry of papistical traditions, depended on the letter of an official document (whose original they no longer had and which to this day has not been discovered), but who (as Weber well observes) regarded the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, not as the bright sun at noon, but as a light rising in the darkness, whose flame, especially if new vapor and fog appeared, must be nourished and increased, so that it might shine more and more beautifully and brightly, and at last completely triumph over the darkness." P. 65-66.

Johannsen, in closing his investigation of the practice of the Reformation respecting the authority of the Augsburg Confession, says,

588: "We have heard enough for the purpose of giving a certain and general verdict respecting the practice of the Church during the period of the Reformation. The most important liturgies (*Kirchenordnungen*) of Protestant countries, mostly prepared by the most distinguished reformers themselves, lie before us, and the use made of them is indicated to us by the several certificates of ordination which have come down to us. In all these liturgies which were published before the religious peace (1555) there is nowhere to be found an unconditional binding to (*unbedingte Verpflichtung auf*) the Augsburg Confession or any other symbolical book, but in all only the desire that the preachers should preach the pure Gospel of Christ according to its pure intent and unmixed with human traditions." In the *Kirchenordnung* introduced into Hanover in 1586, whose author was Urbanus Rhegius, one of the fathers of the Lutheran Church, the charge that the Protestants, as well as the Papists, followed human authority, in adopting Luther's doctrine, is thus answered (*Johannsen*, 537): "To this we reply, that we have received no man's doctrine, be his name what it may, but the true and pure Gospel of Jesus Christ, and we understand this Gospel in all articles of our holy faith as the apostles taught it and as the Christian Church has always understood and held it. Since, however, Luther again restored to and preached in Germany the same pure apostolical Gospel, without human doctrine and corruption, therefore our adversaries call this Gospel Luther's doctrine. But it is a fearful blasphemy to ascribe to a man the Word of God. Therefore we say: Let Luther or others preach the Gospel, then we will believe it, not for Luther's, but for Christ's sake." Well does the author quoting these words add: "Such language needs no commentary. It is a pure effusion of Evangelical truth and freedom, which neither bind to human traditions and dogmas, nor will submit to be bound."

Hardenberg of Bremen was suspected of not being orthodox on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. In order to test his orthodoxy, it was proposed to make him take an oath binding him to the Confession and the Apology. (This was in 1557). His refusal to do this is given in the following language: "I can bind myself with an oath, or a vow, to no other book than the Bible, for all human writings are faulty, the Bible alone is infallible. What has led the world more into error than the fact that certain human manuals were so generally followed, and the Bible abandoned? When I took the degree of Doctor I vowed to adhere to the Bible and the old true Christian doctrine, and to bind myself to no books. This I dare not break. When I was called to the ministerial office here, I was not called on the basis of the Augsburg Confession and its Apology. Had this been done I should at once have made known my scruples. Were I now to bind myself to those books, it would not only seem as if I had heretofore departed from the doctrine taught therein or had opposed it, but I myself would justify this suspicion. But of this

I have not yet been convinced, nor do I believe that my doctrine is contrary to that of the Augsburg Confession.

"But there are other reasons why I cannot comply with the request of the council. The Augsburg Confession was prepared so as to be adapted to the times, for the purpose of gaining the emperor and the pope, or of incensing them as little as possible. Melancthon, who made it, himself acknowledges to Illyricus that it is not perfect." Planck, *prot. Theol.*, vol. II., part II., p. 204.

APPENDIX K.

"Fortunately it can be proved incontrovertibly how greatly those would sin against the spirit of the great reformers who should attribute to them such an inconsistency (as if they made creeds fetters), especially to attribute to them such a view of the Augsburg Confession (as if it was unconditionally binding); and that this view was first introduced afterwards by their pigmy-successors in the lecture room and the pulpit; and by these this view was intensified to such a degree of absurdity, that to the symbolical books and especially the Augsburg Confession, was attributed divinity (Theopneustie) and divine inspiration, and consequently infallibility, and it was asserted that God had with special grace assisted the Church in preparing the Confession, and had communicated to the confessors by means of the Holy Ghost what they were to write." Scheidler, 46. Hammerschmidt, who wants the Confession still to be the rule of faith and advocates its binding authority (91) for preachers and teachers, says, 88: "At the close of the sixteenth and in the beginning of the seventeenth century the symbolical books gained more and more authority in the Evangelical Church, and among these the Augsburg Confession was properly regarded as the most important." He continues to show that not till 1602 was the religious oath introduced into the electorate of Saxony, binding to the Augsburg Confession and the other symbolical books. Henke, *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*, quoted by Johannsen, 540, says: "Not till after the religious peace did the doctrinal controversies among the Evangelical party become the occasion—not indeed at once, nor everywhere, but at first only in countries where these controversies created all kinds of disorder among the ministers—for compiling the confessions of the Evangelical party, accompanied by so-called confutations of opposite errors, or by declarations in respect to disputed points, and thus they were set up as means of doctrinal unity and purity, and sometimes they were signed by all the ministers of the country. These were local arrangements which the circumstances of the age demanded, although the weakness of many princes, the envy of the older house of Saxony (robbed of the electorate) against the younger, and the love of

contention of many theologians, especially the haughtiness of those who had suffered much during the "Interim" war, took the most active part in this matter. More firmly and faithfully these men wanted to hold to the doctrines of Luther, whom they idolized; and others wanted to repel the charge that they had abandoned this system of doctrines. Thus from both sides manifold and more exact limitations of Lutheran orthodoxy were brought about, as well as more rigid declarations of the authority of the symbolical books."

The celebrated historian, Ranke, in his "*Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*," vol. III., p. 245, says: "It need hardly be added, that it was not intended to fix forever by means of the Confession the standard of faith. It is only a fixing of the fact: 'Our churches teach,' 'it is taught,' 'it is taught unanimously,' 'we are falsely accused;' these are the expressions which Melancthon used (in the Confession); his aim is merely to express the convictions thus far developed."



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